CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE

PICHLER

CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE

A HANDBOOK OF POPULAR INSTRUCTION

BY

THE REV. JOHN E. PICHLER

ADAPTED BY

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WITHDRAWN

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PREFACE

Only a few years ago many people hoped our earth would be gradually transformed into a paradise. The growing mastery over nature, the magnificent progress of industry, the continual increase of wealth, the easy conquest of distances—all of these were expected to open up to man innumerable pleasures, especially if and when he would no longer trouble himself about any commandments, but permit himself boundless liberty in all things.

These dreams were dispelled by the World War, which left ruin and chaos, want and tears, hate and despair in its wake, and now people no longer believe that the earth will, within a measurable space of time, be converted into a paradise. We know now that the complete happiness we all desire is not to be found on this earth and more intently than ever turn our gaze towards that happy life which Jesus Christ has promised and the road which He has pointed out. The religion of Jesus Christ can richly compensate us for all we have lost. If we follow and practice it with a sincere heart, it will lead us to an eternal and inexpressibly happy life and furthermore procure for us even here on earth, in the midst of sorrow and suffering, an interior peace and contentment which the world vainly seeks to find in pleasure. The Christian religion is the foundation on which society and the State must be reconstructed. Hatred and envy cannot bring about order and happiness; charity alone can do this, the love that is inculcated by the religion of Jesus Christ. Only the Christian religion will prevent future wars, if it enters men's very flesh and blood, for it alone can assuage the passions that lead men to indulge in pride, avarice, envy,

hatred and revenge. The religion of Jesus Christ beautifies and transfigures man's life on earth as nothing else can, and thus makes it a true life.

Unfortunately the majority even of Christians have but a superficial knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ, that is, the Catholic religion. In order to give all an easy opportunity to acquire a thorough knowledge of their religion, its truth, beauty, and ability to make men truly happy, we present this book of simple instructions. May it be of service to them and also to those of a different or of no faith who sincerely wish to become acquainted with the Catholic religion as it really is and to readjust their attitude accordingly.

He who wants to obtain true profit for his soul from the reading of this work should first ask God, without whom we can do nothing, for light, meditate a while after each chapter, make a good resolution in accordance with what he has read, and ask God for grace to carry out this resolution.

Certain passages are printed in bold type for those who desire to master fully the fundamental truths of religion.

May God bless this book and its readers!

THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

THE NECESSITY AND SOURCE OF RELIGION

1. Religion signifies worshipping and serving God. It is our duty to worship and serve God because He is our Creator and Supreme Master and because He commands us to worship and serve Him. "I am the Lord, thy God!" He said to the Israelites and then gave His commandments (Exod. XX). Upon the fulfilment of these commandments depends our eternal salvation. It is foolish to neglect God and to immerse oneself entirely in work or pleasure. Jesus has said: **"What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?"** (Matth. XVI, 26.)

Religion is absolutely necessary even for our earthly happiness. Without it we do not know why we are here. Religion alone can give aim and purpose to life. Religion procures for us the highest happiness and the greatest consolation. It teaches us to love God and in this love we find the purest and highest joy there is. Religion teaches us further that we have an almighty and infinitely kind Father in Heaven, who, if we love Him, will direct all things for our best and reward us with immeasurable, never-ending happiness after death. Irreligion leads to despair, especially in times of misfortune or suffering. Finally, it is religion alone that makes people good, conscientious, and charitable, and thus promotes happiness in the family circle and in public life.

2. Religion also teaches us how we should honour and serve God. Men will not discover the true religion unaided. Those who try to do so fall into all kinds of errors and contradictions. God has given us the true religion. Even in the pre-Christian era He revealed its first beginnings, but His only begotten Son,

Jesus Christ, brought it in its perfection from Heaven. Many of the truths that God has revealed to us were set down at His command and with His assistance in "the holy Bible." The living teacher of religion to-day is the Catholic Church, founded by Jesus Christ. God Himself is with that Church and inspires her. Therefore, if we want to know the truth in matters of religion, we must apply to the Catholic Church and believe what she teaches. If we believe and live according to this faith, we are truly religious and can reasonably hope that we shall be saved.

The true religion is called Christian because it was brought by Jesus Christ; it is called Catholic because it is preached by the Catholic Church.

3. To serve God we must know Him and be aware of the end for which He has destined us and the means He has provided for our salvation. Revelation enlightens us concerning these things. We must furthermore do everything that God has commanded us to do. We must in particular enter into a most intimate union with Him and receive supernatural powers through the Sacraments which He has given us, and through prayer. Let us therefore consider: (1) What God has revealed to us; (2) what He commands us to do; (3) how He sanctifies us through the Sacraments, and (4) how we should pray.

Why do we need religion?

We need religion in order to attain eternal salvation and to be happy here on earth.

How does God communicate the true religion to us?

God has revealed the true religion to us through Jesus Christ and has it proposed to our belief by the Catholic Church.

The Hopelessness of Unbelief

In 1920 there died in Vienna Dr. Leopold von Schroeder, Professor of Philosophy at the University. He was a member of the

Academy of Sciences and a scholar held in high esteem by the whole world. Though a Protestant, he was a believing Christian who respected the Catholic Church. In 1912 Dr. von Schroeder had said among other things in a lecture that later appeared in print: "Like most of my fellows, I lost the faith of my childhood when I was a young man. I still shudder when I recall how I looked upon religion as something I was done with, and sought a substitute for it in science and art. Time passed and when, after I had earnestly sought the truth, I arrived at the turning point and denied my religion, I was fortified not a little by the consciousness that I was sincere. But it is impossible for me to describe the feeling of unhappiness, isolation and despair which came over me and continued to grow stronger with the passing years, threatening to engulf my whole being and making life seem altogether worthless, meaningless, and aimless. At the very utmost, what could my scientific attainments gain for me? I might edit one or two Hindu texts with a few additamenta more or less well done; perhaps interpret a few Vedic hymns more correctly than my predecessors, etc. Thus I might become a professor and earn my living,—yet in reality of what use was all this to *me?* I had to admit that it was as good as useless, nay worse, the disillusion of my hopes of attaining to something high and glorious and in the end finding nothing but a poor, famishing human heart crying for something higher and better, as the stag cries for fresh water." (Prof. Dr. L. von Schroeder, *Das Rufen Gottes,* Berlin, 1912, pp. 6 sq.)

How Religion Consoles Men

He who is chained to a bed of sickness during most of his life is regarded as most unfortunate by the whole world. But suffering can be transfigured by means of religion. Sister Mary Bernadette Frey, a native of Switzerland, soon after her entrance into the Cistercian Order, was stricken by a severe disease. Her spine became so weak and tender that she had to have her head constantly in splints and fastened by straps to the wall and ceiling. In this painful posture, which permitted very little movement, the patient spent fifty-two years. In spite of her almost unbearable suffering she was always cheerful and even jested at times. The love of God and the hope of Heaven rendered all her suffering sweet. A great many other sufferers used to visit her and went away comforted. After she had borne her illness fifty years, the Pope sent a cardinal

to her with a holographic letter asking for her prayers. The cardinal sang a solemn high Mass in her cell. On the eve of Pentecost, 1913, she was called to her eternal reward. 50,000 people attended her funeral She was called "the Saint of Viterbo."

The Necessity of Religious Instruction

Religious instruction is as necessary as religion itself, for without it young people would not learn to know God and the road to Heaven. Without religious instruction the meaning and end of life would be hidden from them and they would remain ignorant of the highest happiness and deprived of the greatest consolation. Without religious instruction they would be uneducated, for they would be ignorant of what is the most important thing in life; they would lack culture of the heart, which is so much more important than that of the mind. One of the greatest educationalists of modern times, Dr. Otto Willmann, says: "To relegate religion to the background in school is like taking the sun out of the heavens or springtide out of the almanac."

It is the strict duty of parents to see to it that their children are thoroughly instructed in the true, that is, the Catholic, religion; and it is the strict duty of the young to attend this instruction. No human law can remove this duty imposed by God Himself.

It is objected that to force religious instruction upon the young would be useless and even harmful. We reply that the young need guidance and direction in this as in all other matters. No child will feel it a burden if he is lovingly persuaded by his parents to attend religious instruction. Every child of a moderately good disposition will open his heart joyfully to the teachings of religion. What we must provide against is that children are forcibly driven to irreligion. It is an act of the greatest cruelty to keep them away from the Divine Saviour, who in His great love for them cries out: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark X, 14).

Older children also have urgent need of religious instruction. For they meet with important questions concerning life and conduct which they can only solve if they have received a thorough grounding in religion. Further, there are many social and political questions and the choice of a vocation that imperiously demand an answer. Finally, at this age the work of self-instruction has to be begun, which is all the more difficult because just at this juncture

the life of the soul is in a state of fermentation and change. Whether and how the young boy at this age instructs himself is a matter that is apt to prove decisive for his whole life and consequently also for eternity. Sacred Scripture says: "A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. XXII, 6). In this very difficult work of self-education it is necessary for the young to be properly guided and enlightened.

In America to-day we can clearly see the consequences of education without religion. Religious instruction has been banned from the State schools and it is permitted only in private schools, and as a result crimes committed by young persons have increased appallingly.

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PART I

WHAT GOD HAS REVEALED TO US

CHAPTER I

The Apostles' Creed—How We Can Know God

1. The most important things God has revealed to us and proposed for our belief are contained in the *Apostles' Creed,* so called because it has come down to us from the time of the Apostles.

This Creed reads as follows:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, Communion of Saints, forgiveness of sins, Resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

2. The Apostles' Creed contains twelve sentences or "articles of faith."

The first is: **I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth.**

That there is an almighty, infinitely wise and good God, we know in several ways.

God has often spoken to men and revealed Himself to them. He spoke to Adam and Eve in Paradise; later He revealed

Himself to Noe; then to Abraham and his descendants, especially the Prophets. But He revealed Himself most clearly through His Son, Jesus Christ. Through this manifold revelation we can obtain a distinct knowledge of God.

3. We can also know God by observing the world. For it is clear that the world has come into being and is gradually developing. Now it could not have come into being of and by itself; consequently, it must have been created by an Almighty God.

Further, the world is arranged with marvellous wisdom, such as God alone possesses. For example, the heavenly bodies are the most magnificent and exact time-piece according to which all our clocks must be regulated. But even the simplest watch or clock cannot have made itself. Least of all can the glorious clock of the heavens have made itself; it must have been made by someone. The plants and their seeds have been wisely planned, and this plan must have been thought out by some intelligent being. Now it was not the work of man; hence God alone can have been the Maker. Yet more wonderful is the ordering of the animals with their power to move and propagate. It has taken man thousands of years of study and experiment to produce practicable flying machines. But far more ingenious than the best flying machine is the bird, which is both a flyer and a machine in one. It can have been planned only by an all-wise God. An egg, from which a little bird comes forth, is something marvellous, the like of which man has never been able to produce. Such a wonderful thing can have been produced only by an infinitely wise Creator.

The most wonderful thing in all creation is the human body. The preparation of the blood, its circulation, and the manner in which it renews the strength of the body while at the same time renewing itself, is an incomparable miracle, beside which the most scientific water supply system invented by man is insignificant. Now, if a scientific water supply sys-

tem cannot come into existence by itself, but must be planned and carried out by experts, much less can the circulation of the blood be the result of mere chance.

4. Again, the inner consciousness of our souls, our conscience, distinctly tells us that we are subject and answerable to a higher Power. All nations hear the voice of conscience, and this inner voice that tells us of a higher Power, cannot be deceptive.

It is true, there are some men who deny the existence of God. There were atheists already three thousand years ago, for we read in the Bible that at that time "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm XIII, 1). 1500 years ago St. Augustine gave the reason for the existence of atheism in the following words: "No one denies that there is a God, except he who prefers that there should be no God."

The atheist destroys his own temporal and eternal happiness. For our greatest consolation and our highest happiness consists in this, that we have a Father in Heaven, who loves us exceedingly and with whom we shall be for all eternity. The atheist robs himself of this consolation on earth, and of eternal happiness after death, for Jesus Christ has said: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Mark XVI, 16).

Therefore let us say with all our hearts: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth!

How do we know God!

We know God: (1) from the wonderful ordering of nature; (2) through the voice of our conscience; and (3) most of all through divine Revelation.

An Atheist

Perhaps the most bitter infidel known in history was Frederick Nietzsche at the end of the 19th century, who in his writings declared again and again that men no longer believe in God, that

there is no God, that God is dead. But was he really convinced of this?

Mrs. Ida Overbeck relates that once, when conversing with Nietzsche, she remarked that the idea of God had little value for her. "Nietzsche replied with deep emotion: 'You say that only to please me. Never give up the idea of God, which you possess unconsciously; for just as you are, and as I have always found you, your life is governed by a great idea. This great idea is the idea of God.' His face twitched nervously, and it was with difficulty that he regained composure. 'I have renounced the idea of God. I want to create something new, I will not and must not go back. I shall perish as a victim of my passions; they toss me to and fro; I find myself continually falling apart, but I do not care.'" In the end Nietzsche went insane and died in this condition.

How foolish are they who allow such men to rob them of their belief in God!

CHAPTER II

What God Is and How Great and Good He Is

1. God is a Spirit, who exists by Himself and is infinitely perfect.

"God is a Spirit," the Saviour Himself tells us (John IV, 24). This means: God is a Being endowed with intelligence and will, not a blind power. He has no body such as we have, but is pure intellect and will. If the Bible speaks of the "eye" of God or the "hand" of God, this is a metaphorical expression denoting His omniscience and omnipotence.

Therefore God cannot be represented by any image. But we may form a picture of Him corresponding to our sensitive nature, and for this good pictures are helpful.

God exists by Himself. There is no being besides God that has its existence from itself; all other beings have their origin outside themselves,—in God. God has His origin in Himself alone. There is no other being that exists of necessity; but it is impossible to think of God as not existing. His existence is a necessary part of His essence. Therefore He said to Moses from the burning bush: "I am who am" (Exod. III, 14).

God is the fulness of being, *He is infinitely perfect, i. e.,* He possesses in the highest degree every good quality that can be predicated of men, of angels, or of Himself. There is no fault or imperfection in Him.

2. Of the different divine attributes we shall consider the following:

Eternity. God is *eternal.* "Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world were formed, from eternity and to

eternity Thou art God" (Psalm LXXXIX, 2). Because it is in the nature of God that He must exist, there is no time when He did or does not exist; He has always been and will always be. If we remain faithful to Him, we shall be forever safe. "The world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof; but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever" (1 John II, 17).

Immutability. God is *unchangeable.* "With whom [God] there is no change, nor shadow of alteration" (Jas. I, 17). Since He is infinitely perfect, He can neither acquire nor lose any attribute.

Omnipresence. God is *everywhere.* In Holy Scripture the Psalmist says to Jehovah: "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art present. If I take wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: even there also shall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalm CXXXVIII, 8–10). St. Paul instructed the pagans in Athens: God is "not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and are" (Acts XVII, 27, 28).

When Adam and Eve had sinned, they tried to hide themselves from God under the trees of Paradise. That was a foolish act. When Joseph of Egypt was tempted by the wife of Putiphar, he thought of God's presence and said: "How can I do this wicked thing and sin against my God?" He acted wisely.

Omniscience. God knows everything. "Neither is there any creature invisible in His sight; but all things are naked and open to his eyes" (Heb. IV, 13). All that is, has its being from God; nothing happens without His power; therefore nothing can remain hidden from Him. To Him there is no past and no future, but only the present; what to us is past or yet to come, lies open before Him.

God showed that He knows the future when He permitted the Prophets of the Old Covenant to foretell many things that

were to happen later, such as, for example, the destruction of Jerusalem. That God knows the past, He will show us most clearly when, after death, He calls us to account for all our thoughts, words, and actions.

The four above-mentioned attributes tell us how God is in Himself.

3. When we consider Him in His operations, the following attributes arise before our minds:

Omnipotence. God can do anything He wishes to do. "With God all things are possible," Jesus tells us (Matth. XIX, 26). He showed His omnipotence most gloriously when He created the world out of nothing; He also shows it through the extraordinary miracles that He performs from time to time. He can always help us; in the long run no one can resist Him. "If God be for us, who is against us?"—that is, who can harm us? (Rom. VIII, 31).

Wisdom. God is exceedingly wise. He knows how to order all things for the best. "How great are thy works, O Lord!" exclaims the Psalmist, "thou hast made all things in wisdom" (Ps. CIII, 24). We can admire the wisdom of God in nature, in history, and in our own lives. "Commit thy way to the Lord, and trust in him, and he will do it" (Ps. XXXVI, 5).

Holiness. God is exceedingly holy. All that He does is good; He can do no wrong or evil. He wills only what is good and hates evil. "The works of the Lord are all good" (Ecclus. XXXIX, 21). "Be ye holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy," are His own words (Lev. XIX, 2).

In His nature God is immutable; He is eternal; He has always been and will always be. He is omnipresent; He knows all things.

In His operations God is omnipotent; He can do whatever He wills; He is exceedingly wise; He knows how to order all things for the best; He is exceedingly holy; He wills only what is good and hates evil.

God is Inscrutable

"O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and recompense shall be made him? For of him, and by him, and in him, are all things: to him be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. XI, 33–36.)

CHAPTER III

How Great and Good God Is

1. When we consider God in His relations towards His creatures, especially towards us men, we perceive the following attributes in Him:

Justice. God is *just,* that is, He rewards the good and punishes the wicked, each according to his deserts. "Without respect of persons [He] judgeth according to everyone's work" (1 Pet. I, 17). To some extent God rewards and punishes even in this life, in order to encourage the just, reform sinners, and warn others. Consider how He protected the pious Noe and the innocent Joseph in Egypt; how He punished Adam and Eve for their pride and disobedience, and how He destroyed the immoral race of men by the Flood; how He punishes men in our time for their unbelief and immorality. But full retribution comes only after death. The present life is a time of probation. St. Paul writes: "We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil" (2 Cor. V, 10).

Benevolence. God is exceedingly kind. He loves us and shows us His love unceasingly. The benefits He showers upon us cannot be measured or numbered. "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made" (Wisd. XI, 25). "God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son" (John III, 16). "Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us" (1 John IV, 19).

Mercy. God is exceedingly merciful. He has pity for the un-

fortunate, most of all for sinners. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live" (Ez. XXXIII, 11).

Jesus has given us a beautiful picture of God's mercy in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Consider, too, how after the sin of our First Parents God took pity on the human race and sent a Redeemer; how He pitied the Israelites when they called upon Him in their misery in Egypt, and how wonderfully He saved them. Consider how the Saviour took pity on those that suffered; how lovingly He helped them when they came to Him with confidence; how He cried out: "Come to me, all you that labour and are burthened, and I will refresh you!" (Matth. XI, 28.)

Truthfulness. God is absolutely truthful, *i. e.,* He cannot lie or err.

Fidelity. God is faithful, *i. e.,* He keeps all His promises.

"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor as the son of man, that he should be changed. Hath he said then, and will he not do? Hath he spoken, and will he not fulfil?" (Numb. XXIII, 19.) God promised Adam and Eve a Redeemer and He kept His promise. Jesus, the Son of God, promised He would not leave His Apostles as orphans, but would send the Holy Ghost down from Heaven to remain with them always. And He fulfilled His promise. We can always rely absolutely on God's word. Jesus says: "Heaven and earth shall pass, but my word shall not pass" (Matth. XXIV, 35).

2. God possesses every good quality in the highest degree. He is infinitely good and perfect. All that is good on earth emanates from the divine goodness. God is infinitely beautiful and sublime. All earthly beauty is but a faint reflection of His. He Himself is an unfathomable ocean of beauty. Because He is infinitely good and beautiful, God *merits all our love.* If we love Him with all our heart, He will bestow Himself upon us and make us truly happy, even here on earth. He says: "If anyone

love me, . . . my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (John XIV, 23). But there is no true and lasting happiness without God. God has created us so that we can find contentment only in Him. Therefore the Psalmist writes in Holy Scripture: "What have I in heaven? and besides thee what do I desire upon earth? . . . Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever!" (Ps. LXXII, 25–26.)

O my God, I love Thee with my whole heart! I love Thee above all things because Thou art infinitely good and beautiful.

How does God act in His relations towards us?

God is just; He rewards the good and punishes the wicked, everyone according to his deserts. God is kind. God is merciful; He has pity on sinners and the unfortunate. God is truthful; He cannot lie nor err. God is faithful; He keeps what he promises.

How St. Augustine Found Happiness

St. Augustine was born at Tagaste in Northern Africa in 354. When a young man he sought happiness, first in pleasures and amusements, then in knowledge and fame. He became a teacher of rhetoric and enjoyed the esteem of his fellow men. But with all this he felt wretched and unhappy. His soul yearned for something higher. He perceived that God was calling him to His service. Yet he felt that it was impossible for him to master his passions and keep the commandments. At last, moved by the reading of the Bible and by the example of the holy anchorites, he took courage, and began to love God with his whole heart and to serve Him with all his strength. He now felt extremely happy. In his "Confessions" he describes his happiness in inspired words: "Thou hast created us for Thee, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find peace in Thee!"

This is the experience of every human heart.

CHAPTER IV

How the World Came Into Existence

1. The first article of the Creed is: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth." This means that God is the Creator of the world, *i. e.*, that He has made everything.

The Bible tells us that God made the world in six days. He himself revealed this to men, and Moses wrote it down by divine command.

The Church has never required that the phrase "six days" should be understood literally. Holy Scripture itself tells us that "A thousand years in the sight of God are as yesterday" (Ps. LXXXIX, 4). What are a million years in His sight? Therefore we can take the "days" of the Mosaic account of creation to be immense periods of time. It may be that God showed the creation of the world in a vision, in which the spectators saw the world made in six days. In any event, He wished to reveal to man not so much how He made the world as that He created it out of nothing—Heaven and earth, land and sea, all that is in the heavens, sun, moon, and stars, and all that is on earth, plants, animals, and men. In doing so probably God permitted one kind of plant to develop out of another, one species of animal out of another (evolution).

2. When we consider the *magnitude of the created universe,* we receive an idea of the greatness and power of God. The earth harbours and nourishes almost 1600 million human beings and an immense number of animals. Yet the earth is but a tiny planet of our sun, and the sun one of hundreds of millions of

so-called fixed stars, each as big as or much bigger than the sun. How great God must be who made all this out of nothing!

Furthermore, the created universe is as beautiful as it is great. Behold the splendour and the loveliness of the stars, seas, mountains, forests, meadows, rivers, lakes, etc. How wise and good God must be to have made all these beautiful things!

3. *God's intention* in creating the world was His glorification; He desired to show us His splendour and His goodness in order that we might love and praise Him.

But God made the world also for us, that we might live in it, enjoy it, and through a life pleasing to Him, attain eternal happiness.

God has this same twofold intention in all that He does in the world. He obtains the end of His first intention in all things and all finally tend to His glory. Whether the end of His second intention is reached, depends on our good will. "To them that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. VIII, 28).

Whence did the world originate?

The world was created by God.

What do we mean by saying that God created the world?

By saying that God created the world we mean that He made it out of nothing.

CHAPTER V

The World of Spirits

1. Besides the visible world, God also created an invisible world of spirits. These are the innumerable hosts of *angels.*

The angels are pure spirits, that is, beings endowed with intellect and will. They are not enveloped in a body, like the human soul, but are incorporeal. God made them exceedingly good and beautiful and equipped them with a high degree of knowledge and great powers. As their greatest adornment He gave them sanctifying grace. As a consequence they were exceedingly happy.

2. God wished to make them even happier by constituting them in inexpressible unending bliss. But first he tested their humility and obedience. Many angels, Satan at their head, rose up and said: "I will exalt our throne above the stars. . . . I will be like the most High" (Is. XIV, 13–14). Others, with the Archangel Michael at their head, remained faithful to God and fought furiously against the rebels. God took a hand in the battle and cast the proud angels into the abyss of hell. They are damned for all eternity. We call them evil spirits or devils like their leader. God rewarded the faithful angels by constituting them in eternal beatitude in Heaven.

3. The *angels in Heaven* see God with unspeakable bliss and sing glorious hymns in His praise. They cry out to one another: "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts; all the earth is full of his glory!" (Is. VI, 3). They love God and joyfully carry out His commands, bear His messages, and protect us, body and soul. They ward off the wicked spirits, warn us against evil, exhort us to do good, and intercede for us with

God. In His goodness God has given a guardian angel to every man, woman, and child. Jesus Christ says of little children: "Their angels always see the face of my Father" (Matth. XVIII, 10). You should honour your guardian angel, follow his inspirations, call on him to help you, and be grateful to him.

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here;
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard, to rule and guide.

4. The evil spirits, especially their leader, the Devil, hate God and men. They try to seduce us to be unfaithful to God, so that we may be plunged into eternal misery. St. Peter exhorts us: "Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist ye, strong in faith!" (1 Pet. V, 8–9).

What do the good angels do for us?

The good angels protect us, body and soul; they exhort us to be good and intercede for us.

What do the evil spirits do to us?

The evil spirits seek to seduce us to sin and to cast us into hell.

Tobias and his Companion

When the Israelitic nation was forced into exile, about 700 B. C., there lived in Ninive, the capital of Assyria, a just and pious man by the name of Tobias. He spent almost his whole fortune relieving the needy. Now, God permitted that Tobias should lose his sight. Tobias bore this severe trial without complaining. He fell into great want and saw himself forced to ask a certain Gabelus, in the distant town of Rages in Media, to pay him an old debt. His son Tobias, an innocent young man, was to undertake the journey to Rages. A noble youth offered himself as guide, and his services were accepted. It was the angel Raphael, who had been sent in human form by God. But neither Tobias nor his parents knew this. Thus the young Tobias and the angel set out on their journey.

By the River Tigris Tobias, when he was about to wash his feet,

was attacked by a large fish. The angel cried out to him to seize the fish by the gills and draw him out of the water. Tobias did so. The fish made excellent food and, at the advice of the angel, Tobias preserved the gall for use as a medicine. When they came to Ecbatana, the capital of Media, the angel advised Tobias to ask Raguel to give him his daughter Sara in marriage. He also instructed him to go through the marriage ceremony in such manner that the Devil could not gain power over him. Tobias followed the advice, the angel asked Raguel for him, and Raguel gave his daughter to Tobias. During the marriage celebrations the angel went to Rages to fetch the money.

Then they set out on the return journey. At the advice of the angel, Tobias hastened ahead with him, while Sara followed with the luggage and the animals. Full of anxiety the parents awaited the arrival of their son. When they had him with them again, they wept with joy and all together gave thanks to God for his safe return. Then the young Tobias, following the instructions of the angel, smeared his fathers' eyes with the gall of the fish, whereupon the film vanished, and the old man recovered his sight. Then Sara arrived and the happiness of all was complete.

Tobias told his father of the kindness which his guide had shown him. Filled with gratitude, they begged Raphael to accept one-half of the money they had brought home. It was only then that the angel revealed who he was. Soon after he suddenly disappeared.

The story is related in detail in the Book of Tobias, which forms part of the Old Testament.

Just as the angel Raphael accompanied Tobias on his journey, helping and advising him with loving care, so an angel given by God accompanies each one of us through life. Let us follow his inspirations as obediently as Tobias followed those of his unknown companion, and we shall safely reach our eternal goal.

Another example of the help given by a guardian angel is related in the Acts of the Apostles. When, after the Ascension of Jesus Christ, the Apostles zealously preached the gospel, King Herod, to please the Jews, had St. Peter thrown into prison and was going to have him publicly tried after Easter. But before this could happen, an angel suddenly appeared in the prison, the chains fell from Peter's hands, the angel guided him past the guards and through an iron door into the street. Thus St. Peter was saved.

We see every day how the guardian angels protect the children committed to their care.

CHAPTER VI

How God Created Man

1. How God created man we learn in Holy Scripture, chiefly in the Book of Genesis.

God formed the body of Adam "of the slime of the earth," and breathed into it an immortal soul; that is, by His omnipotence He caused the body of Adam to be inhabited by an immortal spirit. Then He produced the body of Eve from the side of Adam and breathed an immortal soul into it also.

God bestowed on Adam and Eve the gift of supernatural holiness, and they lived extremely happy in Paradise, which was a glorious garden. Their bodies were to be immortal through eating of the fruit from the tree of life. But God strictly forbade them to eat of the tree of knowledge. Here they had to decide whether or not they would obey God. By obedience to the divine command they were to merit happiness for themselves and for their posterity, for they became the ancestors of all men.

2. Therefore, we men were created by God and He is *our Master,* to whom we belong entirely, and whom we must worship and serve. But God is not only our Master, He is also *our Father.* He loves us dearly and desires to reward our fidelity in His service with unending bliss in Heaven. Without God we cannot be happy.

O God, our Lord and Father, we wish to serve Thee joyfully.

Where did man come from?

God made man.

Of what does man consist?

Man consists of a material body and an immortal sou
What is God to us?
God is our highest Lord and kind Father.

Man Not Developed from the Brute

Infidels do not wish to admit that they are creatures of Go Therefore, many of them assert that man has developed gradual from some sort of lower animal,—they are not agreed from whic If this were so, there would have to be a number of intermedia stages between that particular species of animal and man. The would have to exist creatures half animal and half man, and othe in intermediate stages of development. This is not the case. Bu even if man had really developed from the animal kingdom, thi could not have happened by accident, but only through an act o divine omnipotence, and thus man would still be a creature of Go

But the soul of man could never develop from the animal king dom. For animals have no souls that can think, calculate, examin invent, and freely determine their own conduct; they are guide and governed entirely by the instincts of their nature.

Nor has man developed from the savage state by the same stage as irrational brutes. Modern ethnology shows that precisely thos races that have most preserved their primitive condition possess superior knowledge of God and a high degree of morality, that th savagery of the others is the result of gradual degeneration. There fore, if Holy Scripture did not expressly teach that the human sou was directly created by God, unaided reason would persuade u that this is indeed the case,

The Eighth Psalm

1. O Lord our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whol earth!

2. For thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens.

3. Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast per fected praise, because of thy enemies, that thou mayst destroy the enemy and the avenger.

4. For I will behold thy heavens, the works of thy fingers: the moon and the stars which thou has founded.

5. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man that thou visitest him?

6. Thou hast made him a little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour:
7. And hast set him over the works of thy hands.
8. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen: moreover the beasts also of the fields.
9. The birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, that pass through the paths of the sea.
10. O Lord our Lord, how admirable is thy name in all the earth!

CHAPTER VII

The Soul of Man—Man and Beast

1. God has raised man to rule the earth and the animal world. Even the body of man He formed more nobly than that of the brute beast. Man's upright carriage shows that, as God has said (Gen. I, 28), he shall rule over all animals that move upon the earth. God has raised him up yet more highly by bestowing on him the gifts of understanding and free will and endowing him with an immortal soul.

Our intellect enables us to think and reflect on innumerable things, *e. g.*, the relation of cause and effect, to plan, to calculate, to understand and speak of spiritual matters, God, virtue, sin. The animals are not able to do all this. It is true they act in a way that is to their advantage. But they do not know why they do so; they merely follow the impulse of their nature, the instinct which God has given them. They cannot invent nor can they make progress.

We men also have impulses; but we must not follow them; we can and should govern them, use them when they help us and suppress them when they instigate us to evil. We are endowed with free will. The animals have no free will, but blindly follow their instincts.

2. *The human soul is immortal.* Jesus Christ revealed this truth when He said: "Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul" (Matth. X, 28). Reason also tells us that there must be a life after death, in which the good are rewarded and the wicked punished. If this were not so, the noblest deeds, *e. g.*, a heroic death for one's faith or country,

would remain unrewarded, and innumerable crimes would go unpunished. God, who is just, could not possibly permit this. The body dies by being dissolved into its parts. But the soul cannot be dissolved, because it is spiritual and hence does not consist of parts. All nations that ever lived have believed in a continued existence of the soul after death. Some individuals have denied this truth, but they were persons who had reason to fear the next life.

3. The soul resembles God by possessing intellect, free will, and immortality. We are images of God and children of God. Let us esteem the divine image in our soul and lead a life that befits children of God. If we are tempted to act in a low, mean way, let us say: "I was born for better things!"

How are we distinguished from brute beasts?

We are distinguished from brute beasts by having a soul which possesses understanding and free will and is immortal.

Whose images are we through our immortal souls?

Through our immortal souls we are images of God.

The "Kluge Hans"

Infidels would have it that there is no essential difference between man and animal. But they have failed to prove this contention. Some years ago the newspapers reported that there was a horse in Germany which possessed almost human understanding. It was called "der Kluge Hans." The horse could count. When his master asked, for example, how much was twice three, he struck the ground six times with his hoof; when asked how much was twenty minus five, he struck it fifteen times. Crowds gathered and admired this clever beast. Learned scientists wrote treatises on its accomplishments. But when a university professor, Dr. Pfungst, examined the matter more closely, he found that the owner, a man named von Osten, nodded his head slightly each time the horse was expected to strike the ground. This was a sign for the horse to begin, and when the animal had made the right number, his master again nodded his head—without being aware of it—and the horse

ceased to paw. Hans was so well trained that he was guided by his master's slightest movements. But he could not count, for he was only an irrational animal, unable to form abstract concepts without which counting is impossible.

The Dog That Could Think

A dog in Mannheim was famed for even more remarkable performances than "der Kluge Hans." He had acquired a tapping alphabet, the separate letters of which, like those of the Morse telegraph code, consisted of long and short signs. By means of this alphabet he expressed his thoughts and observations in the presence of his mistress, Mrs. Moekel, and her daughter. He could do arithmetical examples and used to help Mrs. Moekel's younger children in their sums; he also wrote letters, composed verses, etc. A gentleman composed a poem in which he praised the dog's cleverness and especially his talent for doing sums. The dog answered as follows:

"Loll is not clever because he can do arithmetic. All animal can. Look into eye cat, horse or dog, and you will see: animals can think and eat."

A number of such letters were published by Professor Dr. J. E. Ziegler in a work entitled, "Die Seele des Tieres" ("The Animal Soul," 1916).

But Dr. William Neumann, a physician in Baden-Baden, wanted to procure reliable proofs of the dog's intelligence and tested him thoroughly during a long visit he paid the Moekel family. He showed the dog various objects and then asked him what he had seen. The dog tapped the answer on a tablet which a member of the Moekel family held in front of him. It was soon seen that whenever one of the Moekel family had seen what Dr. Neumann showed the dog, the dog wrote the correct answer; but when no one had seen it, or when Neumann had misled the family about the object shown evasive answers followed, such as: "Don't want to!" "Go to Jericho!" or a wrong answer. After a number of such tests and observations Dr. Neumann drew the following conclusion: "The dog taps in a purely mechanical way what is desired by the woman who conducts the test. Apparently she makes use of the extremely simple artifice of tilting the tablet slightly and thus checking the dog's paws as soon as he has given the correct number of taps." Dr. Neumann made this statement although he had begun the tests with quite a contrary purpose. The dog—or rather, its own-

ers—had misled the public, including a considerable number of unbelieving professors and doctors. How credulous many people are when they hear things contrary to the Christian faith!

One Who Denied Immortality

The French writer Voltaire in many of his writings ridiculed belief in the immortality of the soul, nay the whole Christian religion, and in this way led innumerable persons into the pit of scepticism. The cause of his hostility to the faith probably was his immoral life. He was not inwardly convinced of that which he wrote against religion, for when he came to die he was overwhelmed with a terrible fear. He wanted to have a priest called, so that he might confess his sins. But his godless friends would not allow any priest to see him, notwithstanding his urgent pleading. Voltaire's fear became greater and greater. He cried out: "I feel a hand taking hold of me and dragging me to the judgment-seat of God. The Devil is here—he wants to seize me—I can see hell—oh, hide it from me!" In despair he writhed like a worm and tore his flesh with his nails. Finally he gave one more terrible cry and fell back, dead (W. Kreiten, *Voltaire,* 2nd ed., p. 552).

CHAPTER VIII

How God Equipped Our First Parents—What Destiny He Assigned to Us

1. The greatest gift which God bestowed on our First Parents was *sanctifying grace.* Sanctifying grace made their souls radiant with heavenly beauty and most pleasing to God. In their rational, immortal souls they were images of God; but through sanctifying grace they became yet more like Him; they became true children of God, and God gave them a right to Heaven. He also gave them great keenness of understanding, inclined their will to goodness, and granted them freedom from illness and sorrow and a complete dominion over the animal world. They were destined not to die. Because these gifts raised man above his nature, they are called *supernatural.*

2. Supernatural also was the destination which God gave to our first parents and to all their offspring. He did not create us for this world, this valley of tears. Nor did He create us merely for the sake of others. God gave us a much higher purpose—to know, honour, love, and serve Him; that is, to do His will and thus to merit eternal happiness in Heaven.

God could not have given us a higher or more satisfying destination. Therefore let us thank Him and never forget for what we are here! Let us utilize every moment in fulfilling our vocation and attaining our heavenly goal! "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all man" (Eccles. XII, 13).

What are the effects of sanctifying grace?

Sanctifying Grace makes the soul holy and pleasing to God; it makes us children of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.

For what purpose did God make us?

God made us to know, love, and serve Him here on earth, and to enjoy Him for ever in Heaven.

"And Then?"

One day a young man came to St. Philip Neri and enthusiastically told him he was going to study law. The Saint asked him: "And then?" The student answered, "Then I shall become a lawyer." "And then?" the Saint asked again. The student replied: "Then I shall earn a great deal of money, buy a beautiful home, enjoy life, and look forward to a peaceful old age." Again St. Philip asked, quite coolly: "And then?" The young man hesitated. At length he said: "Finally, I shall have to die, of course." "And then?" asked the Saint, raising his voice. This time the youth made no answer, but went away. However, he could not forget the words, "And then?" He reflected that he could not live on earth for ever and that what mattered most was the life after death. Henceforward he strove to earn eternal happiness.

CHAPTER IX

How Our First Parents Sinned

1. The Devil was envious of Adam and Eve and, to deprive them of their bliss tempted them to transgress the commandment which God had given them. He lied to Eve, telling her that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would know the nature of good and evil and become like God. Unfortunately Eve listened to these insinuations, ate of the fruit, and invited Adam to follow her example. They no longer wished to serve God, but rebelled against Him.

2. They soon perceived that the Devil had deceived them. Their holiness and innocence had gone and they had become enemies of God. They were tormented by qualms of conscience and fear. Soon God made known to them what their punishment should be, and told the Devil that enmity would henceforth reign between the evil spirits and mankind; that woman and her posterity would crush the head of the Devil. To Eve He announced that she would suffer much in childbirth and stand under man's sway, often rough. To Adam He announced that the earth would bear thorns and thistles and he would be compelled to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow until he returned to the earth from which he was formed. Thus man lost all supernatural gifts and had to leave Paradise.

3. Adam and Eve spent the remainder of their lives in bitter repentance, upheld only by the thought of God's mercy. God had showed them His mercy by promising that the Devil would be crushed, that is, his sway over men would be taken from him and men would be redeemed and made children of God again. Men now eagerly waited for the *promised Redeemer.*

The sin that promises you pleasure is a sweet poison, oh, trust it not!

"All perdition took its beginning from pride" (Tob. IV, 14).

The Sin of Our First Parents in the Tradition of Nations

What God revealed to our First Parents in Paradise and what they themselves experienced there—called primitive revelation—was handed down to their children and children's children and has been preserved in various forms in the most ancient traditions and legends of nations. Thus in the primitive traditions of most countries there are more or less clearly defined indications regarding the fall of our First Parents. We shall give but a few examples here.

An ancient Hindu legend says: To try the first man, Shiwa (God) permitted a blossom of the fig tree to fall to the ground. The blossom lied to the first man, telling him that he was like God. As a result God cursed man, drove him out of Paradise, and plunged him into an abyss, where he had to do penance for millions of years. At last he repented and was restored to grace. Other Hindu legends relate how the woman, made from a rib of man's body, tempted man to sin and how, as a consequence, he was forced to quit his body, which had now become confused and dark, *i. e.*, subject to decay and death.

According to a Chinese legend, found especially among the followers of the Tâo religion, man originally dwelt on a mountain. All things grew without labour. Man could go where he pleased without fear. The herds grazed in the fields, the birds flew about in flocks, and all the fruits of the earth throve without cultivation. Men lived among the animals; all the world was as one big family. All practised the virtues and lived in innocence. But an unrestrained desire for knowledge drove the race to destruction. A dragon coming forth from the deep seduced men and thenceforward all creation became hostile to them. In a few hours Heaven changed, and man was no longer the same. "Woman was the source and root of all evil."

The ancient Greeks believed that in the beginning the human race lived on earth free from evil and hard labour. But Prometheus, a son of the godlike Titans, sinned against Zeus, the chief of the gods, by robbing him of fire and presenting it to mankind. As a punishment, Zeus made the first woman, called Pandora, and sent her down upon earth with a box in which all evils were enclosed. Overcome by curiosity, Pandora opened the box, and the evils were

set free and immediately spread over the whole earth. Zeus chained Prometheus to a pillar and decreed that his body should be torn by an eagle, the offspring of an evil spirit, until he was liberated by Herakles, a son of the gods.

The following legend is found among the Ewe Negroes on the Coast of Guinea: The first man lived in the beginning with Abasi, the almighty God, in Heaven. Upon the advice of Atai, Abasi's companion, God placed man upon the earth to govern the other creatures, and gave him a wife. But that men might not forget Abasi, they were forbidden to seek food on earth, but had to ascend to Heaven three times daily to take their meals there. Atai taught men how to make fire and to cook *byams* (a food similar to potatoes). Abasi bitterly complained to Atai of the disobedience of man. Now the same Atai, who had seduced men, sent death upon the earth, which snatched away the first parents and caused contention and every other evil to arise among their children.

The famous English traveller, John Franklin (d. 1845), in an account of his second journey to the North Pole, relates the following legend which he heard among a race of Indians in North America: The first man, called Tchapiwih, found a superabundance of food on the earth. He gave his children two kinds of fruits, black and white, but forbade them to eat of the black. He then bade farewell to his family and undertook a long journey for the purpose of bringing the sun down to the earth. During this absence his children were obedient and ate only of the white fruit. But when he went on a second journey to fetch the moon, they forgot their father's command and ate of the black fruit. On his return, the father was extremely angry and told them that henceforward the earth would bear bad fruits and, they would be visited by illness and death.

Of special importance are the traditions of the so-called primitives, *i. e.*, peoples who are still almost in their original state and entirely unaffected by civilization. Thus the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal call the highest being Paluga and relate that he created the first man, called homo, and assigned him to a place called Wotaemi, where various wild fruit trees grew. Paluga forbade men to eat of the fruit during the first half of the rainy season, because he had reserved the first fruits for himself. But our first parents transgressed this commandment and ended unhappily: the man was drowned and changed into a pottwal—a kind of whale—while his wife was transformed into a crab.

CHAPTER X

The Evil Which We Inherited from Our First Parents

1. God desired to bestow upon all men the supernatural gifts and the happiness which He had bestowed upon our First Parents. Adam, as the father of the human race, was to merit those gifts for all of us. But because Adam rebelled against God, he and his posterity were deprived of these gifts. We were born without sanctifying grace. We were no longer children of God and heirs of Heaven. Our intellect is not as bright as that of our First Parents before the Fall; our will is not inclined to good, but strongly tends towards evil. We are not exempt from suffering, disease or death. Paradise disappeared when Adam fell.

2. We have inherited not only the effects of that sin, but the sin itself. Holy Scripture says, "As by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (Rom. V, 12). Adam was the head and the representative of the human race. What he did, was put to the account of all. Thus we have all sinned in him. This is called original sin. Jesus referred to it when He said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John III, 5). If we had not inherited the sin of Adam, we should not have been born in sin, and there would have been no need for us to be "born again." The sufferings of the human race also indicate that it has to bear the burden of an ancient guilt.

3. Jesus Christ redeemed us from this inherited guilt, called original sin, which is removed by Baptism. In Baptism

sanctifying grace is imparted to us, and we again become children of God and heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet we must bear the other evil effects of original sin that still remain, especially the inclination to evil which persists in us as long as we live and which we must struggle against unceasingly, lest it lead us into sin and ruin us.

4. The Blessed Virgin Mary was redeemed in a more perfect way because she was to be the Mother of Jesus Christ: from the first moment of her existence she was preserved free from all stain of sin (Immaculate Conception).

What evil thing do all men inherit from Adam?

All men inherit from Adam sin and its evil effects.

What was the worst effect of Adam's sin?

The worst effect of Adam's sin was that all men were excluded from Heaven.

Was no human being exempt from original sin?

The Blessed Virgin Mary was exempt from original sin.

The further history of the primitive age and the story of the Israelitic nation may be read in any large Bible History.

The Effects of Original Sin in the History of Mankind

When we consider how all men are born in mortal sin, with weakened powers of understanding and with an ineradicable inclination to sin (concupiscence), we can realize why the human race at times could sink so deep. Men became so blind that they worshipped the stars, animals, or idols of wood or stone and believed they were serving these gods when they committed the most terrible acts of prostitution and offered human sacrifices. Even in recent times peaceful Negro villages in Africa were attacked by Mohammedan slave-dealers, all who put up a defence were massacred, and the remainder haled into slavery. Those who fled to the forests or hills were hunted like wild beasts and either killed or captured. The prisoners were bound together and driven through the desert like a herd of cattle. Those who through exhaustion were unable to walk, were slain or simply left where they lay, to die a miserable death. Those who survived the journey were sold into the most

abject slavery,—husbands and wives, parents and children, were pitilessly torn apart.

And what cruelty and heartlessness we witnessed in the World War among Christian nations!

The inclination to sin remains, even after original sin has been effaced by Baptism. The religion of Jesus Christ teaches us how to struggle against this inclination and to conquer it, at the same time offering us the most efficacious helps. But when the teaching of Jesus Christ is not obeyed or is no longer believed, men sink as deeply into sin as ever pagans have sunk. In vain we seek for the causes of the World War in the form of government of this or that country, or in social or economical arrangements, and so on. These may have been contributory causes; but the most profound cause were the passions in men's hearts resulting from the sin of our First Parents: pride, ambition, greed, envy, hatred, revenge, which were no longer restrained by religion, because religion had been cast aside. The depravity of human nature explains why public opinion so often tends to falsehood and evil, and causes the masses to be so easily led by cunning seducers to insurrection, plunder, and murder.

Original Sin and Education

Unbelieving men like Rousseau maintain that man is by nature entirely good and uncorrupted and that, therefore, children should not be trained, but their natural inclinations should be allowed to develop without hindrance; thus they would grow up to be perfect men and women. Many educators have followed this course with very discouraging results. Yet a great many parents still adhere to this error and young people consider it best to be allowed to follow their inclinations freely and without restraint. But experience shows that this only leads to weakness of character, selfishness, rudeness, and worse. The doctrine of original sin explains this, for it tells us that the germ of evil has been laid in man's nature and must be continually combated, first by parents and educators, later by the pupil himself by overcoming selfishness and acquiring control of the passions. It is impossible for a man to acquire a strong and noble character without constantly overcoming self. "If any man will come after me," says our Divine Redeemer, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matth. XVI, 24). "You will progress according as you do violence to yourself," says Thomas à Kempis in the "Imitation of Christ."

CHAPTER XI

How God Governs the World

1. After God had created the world and mankind, He did not abandon them to themselves; He *sustains* the world and all His creatures. Without Him nothing could exist, even for a moment.

2. God also *governs* the world; that is, He provides for His creatures and directs everything to His honour and our good. Nothing occurs that He does not will or permit. His wisdom "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly" (Wisd. VIII, 1). This continual care of God for the world is called *Divine Providence.*

That God has a care for our sustenance, Jesus tells us in the words: "Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat: and the body more than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? . . . Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matth. VI, 25–26, 33). Note the condition laid down: Seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice. This means, be concerned first of all about that which pertains to Heaven, and serve God.

That God cares for all His creatures and directs the fate of man in a special way, we are told by the Saviour: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your

head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: better are you than many sparrows" (Matth. X, 29–31).

In the Old Covenant (that is, before Christ), God directed the fate of the Israelites in such a way that they preserved belief in the true God and the expectation of a Redeemer in the very midst of paganism, and that from this chosen people the true faith spread over the whole earth. Consider the story of Joseph of Egypt! Consider the experiences of your own life!

3. The numerous sufferings that fall to our lot are a means by which God punishes us and warns us, and by which He turns our minds towards Heaven. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth" (Hebr. XII, 6). The Israelites often fell into vices and idolatry. God permitted the enemy to sack their country and oppress them heavily, whereupon they again turned to Him. God also sends suffering to the just to try them, that is, to give them an opportunity of showing and practising virtue and acquiring merits for eternity. Thus Job was enabled by his severe trials to practise patience, resignation, confidence in God, and charity and thereby merited a high degree of happiness in Heaven. The appalling World War was undoubtedly a divine punishment for the godlessness and immorality that had gained such a terrible hold on the nations; a warning to the impious and a trial for the just. God permits changes and a new order of things to follow, so that goodness may finally triumph over evil.

4. God does not will evil, but permits it; that is, He does not hinder it, because He does not wish to deprive men of free will and, further, because He can turn evil into good. The consequences of Adam's fall were not all sad. It led to God sending us a Redeemer; and thus we came to know His love for us. Joseph of Egypt was sold as a slave by his brothers. That was a great sin, but it was applied by God to the salvation of Joseph himself and of his brothers. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ

was the greatest crime ever committed; God permitted it in order that we might be redeemed.

It is very comforting to us to know that our Heavenly Father directs our fate. If only we are faithful to Him, all must turn out for our best. *"To them that love God, all things work together unto good,"* says St. Paul (Rom. VIII, 28). Let us submit to His dispositions and trust in Him even when we do not understand them. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts" (Is. LV, 8–9).

How does God govern the world?

God governs the world by directing all things for our good.

What is the purpose of suffering?

The purpose of suffering is to lead sinners to repent and the just to practise virtue and increase their merits.

Why does God permit evil?

God permits evil because He wants to leave men free and because He can convert evil into good.

"The Little House of Divine Providence"

How pleasing it is to God that we should firmly trust in His Providence, He has often shown by the wondrous assistance with which He has rewarded confidence in Him. The work of Fr. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo in Turin is a remarkable instance of this. A woman, her husband, and three children, who had come to Turin and fallen ill there, were turned away from one hospital after another, and finally died at the inn where they were staying. Seeing this, Father Cottolengo formed the resolution to found a house of refuge to which nobody should be refused admittance. Now he did not possess the means to accomplish this work; but as the institution was sorely needed, he trusted in Providence. He rented two rooms and ordered four beds from a joiner. Some kind person offered to pay for these and as many more as should be required. This was in the year 1828. The institution grew, and more and more benefactors came forward. In 1831 the cholera broke out,

although not in Turin itself, and at the request of the neighbours the government ordered the institution to be closed. But Cottolengo did not lose courage. In 1832 he founded the "Little House of Divine Providence," or the "Little Refuge," as he called it, in the suburb Valdocco. Here again his means only permitted him to rent a little two-roomed cottage. The Sisters who nursed the sick lived in a stable. This institution grew even more quickly than the first. Cottolengo continually founded new houses: one for the aged poor, one for epileptics, one for deaf-mutes, one for cripples, one for incurables, two for young girls exposed to moral dangers, one for neglected boys, a girls' school, an orphanage, a boys' college, etc. Every kind of sufferer was provided for, even idiots. He founded several spiritual societies, the first being that of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, to care for his protégés; and as the need for more Sisters became urgent, he also founded a house for the training of Sisters. He likewise established a Society of Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, a union of secular priests under the aegis of the Blessed Trinity to care for the poor, a "convent of intercession" for nursing Sisters in need of recuperation and others who wished to devote their lives to prayer and sacrifice for the poor souls, a house for penitents, and so on. In the end all these institutions, which still retained the name of "Little House of Divine Providence," contained as many as 3,000 to 4,000 people.

For the upkeep of all these people and institutions there was no source of income. Cottolengo on various occasions was offered property; but he refused it, so that they should live entirely by God's Providence. He kept no account of his expenses and did not even want to know how many persons were sheltered in his institutions. Yet the work prospered, was well managed, and received the highest praise from the authorities. Cottolengo was seldom obliged to appeal to the wealthy; contributions came, unsought for the most part, often at the very moment they were most urgently needed. Once when Cottolengo's architect, Compasso, had to pay two weeks wages to his workmen, he had no money. Cottolengo owed him a considerable sum, and the architect went and asked him for payment. Cottolengo had not so much as a halfpenny and began to speak of Divine Providence. "That is all very fine," said Compasso, "but I have to pay my workmen!" "Have patience; God will provide," Cottolengo replied. "It is now nine o'clock and you had better go to bed." "Go to bed? There is no sleep for me. I must pay the men at eight o'cock to-morrow morning, and I have no money

in hand nor prospect of any." "Go in peace," the servant of God answered, "God will provide your wants before seven tomorrow morning. You may count on that!" The rain fell in torrents as Compasso returned home, full of anxiety. As he sat down to supper, he heard his name called. A friend had come to whom he had appealed, but from whom he no longer expected help. This friend now came to say he would call the following morning at 6 o'clock and bring the necessary sum of money. "Now I see," said Compasso, "the great influence Father Cottolengo has with Divine Providence, and how one may depend on his word." Another time the architect said: "If I had half a million, I should not hesitate to advance it all to this holy man."

Once for two weeks the little home was in great want. It seemed as if God had turned away His paternal eye. To make matters worse, Cottolengo's creditors demanded their money. The man of God had refuge to his usual remedy; he spent the day in prayer and told the portress he would not see any callers. Cottolengo had spent four hours in prayer when a man appeared at the gate, saying he was about to travel to Genoa, and from there to go abroad by boat; before undertaking his journey he earnestly desired to see Cottolengo. Persisting in his demand, he was at length admitted, and when he entered the waiting room, he laid a considerable sum of money on the table and departed. When Cottolengo saw this money, he called the Sisters and, pointing heavenward, said: "My daughters, behold an act of Providence! This money has been brought by a man whose name I do not even know." With this sum he was enabled to satisfy the most pressing of his creditors.

There were hundreds of similar cases; and in this way Cottolengo was able to support his community until his death, in 1842. Afterwards it was continued in the same spirit. (From the Life of Cottolengo by Boniface Müller, Vienna-Hetzendorf, 1898.)

The foundation is still in existence.

Now it is true, Cottolengo was a saint, who received special divine inspirations, and we cannot always follow his example. But we can learn from him to trust in Providence, and the greater our confidence, the more help we shall receive.

From Misery to Happiness

In Mannarguddy (Farther India) there lived a well-to-do merchant called. Govinda Pillai. Through failure in business he and his family were reduced to great poverty. Pillai almost despaired.

He could not endure the thought of seeing his children hungry and set out for Burma to try his luck there. His wife, Tangatammal (*i. e.*, "Golden Woman"), worked as hard as she could to support herself and her nine children, who were between three and sixteen years old. But when her husband remained absent two or three years without sending any word, she also began to despair. She feared the time when her strength would fail and she would be forced to beg with her children from door to door. To escape such a calamity she contemplated suicide; to spare her family, she decided to end her life, not in Mannarguddy, but in some other place. She got some money together and set out with five of her children,—four girls and the youngest boy,—to a town some distance away. The other children, suspecting something wrong, refused to go. Tangatammal's intention was to drown herself and her children in the "holy" river Caveri. On the way they were met by an old man, who wore a long beard and walked with the aid of a stick. He looked like a Hindu monk and asked Tangatammal where she was going. At first she refused to tell him, saying she did not wish to speak of her affairs to a stranger. Presently, however, moved by the kindness of the old man, she unfolded to him all that she had suffered and what she now proposed to do. He bade her have courage and not despair, saying he would take her to a place where she and her children would be well cared for,—where, too, she would find the road to true happiness. The poor woman put confidence in this stranger and followed him to a railway station of Nidamangalam. There the old man asked her whether she had enough money to buy a ticket. Tangatammal gave him what she had, and soon they were all seated in a train bound for Trichinopoli—the old man, the mother, and the children. Arrived at this town, they alighted, and the old man guided them straight to the Catholic Cathedral, where he sent for Fr. Arnlapper, the priest in charge of the catechumens and the orphanage. Fr. Arnlapper came and asked the woman what she wanted. Much embarrassed, she looked around for her guide, but he had disappeared. (Later, after she had been converted, the woman believed the old man must have been St. Joseph.) She told her sad story to Fr. Arnlapper, whereupon the latter placed her and her children in the care of the kind Sisters of St. Anne. They were instructed in the faith and baptized six months later. The woman was overjoyed. She was joined by her other children, and her third son devoted his life to the priesthood. Later the father also joined them, and was won over to the Christian religion.

CHAPTER XII

Jesus the Promised Redeemer

"And [I believe] in Jesus Christ, His [God the Father's] only son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary (second and third articles of the Creed).

1. After God had promised to send a Redeemer, He also provided means by which men could recognize Him when He appeared. He permitted various prophets to foretell His life and caused these prophecies to be written down in Holy Scripture long before the Advent of the Saviour. Two thousand years before Christ was born God revealed to the Patriarch Abraham that the Redeemer should be descended from him: "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. XXII, 18). Again He told King David (1050 before Christ): "I will raise up thy seed after thee . . . and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Kings, VII, 12, 13). God (through the prophet Micheas) revealed (750 B. C.) the Redeemer's birthplace: "Thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity" (Micheas V, 2). Isaias (760 B. C.) prophesied that the Redeemer would be born of a virgin: "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" [that is, "God is with us"] (Isaias VII, 14). Isaias also foretold what miracles the Redeemer would work: "God himself will come and will

save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb shall be free" (Isaias XXXV, 4–6). David prophesied that the Redeemer would be a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech (Ps. CIX, 4). Melchisedech was a king and priest in the time of Abraham who offered to God a sacrifice of bread and wine. David foretold further that the Redeemer would suffer exceedingly; that He would say: "I am a worm, and no man: the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. All they that saw me have laughed me to scorn. . . . They have dug my hands and feet. They have numbered all my bones. . . . They parted my garments amongst them; and upon my vesture they cast lots" (Psalm XXI, 7–8; 17–19). Isaias prophesied: "He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. . . . He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter" (Is. LIII, 4–7). Daniel (600 B. C.) foretold that from the time when the Jews, returned from their captivity in Babylon, received permission to rebuild Jerusalem (this permission was granted about the year 453 B. C.), until the death of the Redeemer not quite 70 year-weeks (70 times 7 years) would elapse (Daniel IX, 24–27). David prophesied that the Redeemer would rise again from the dead. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption" (Ps. XV, 10). He also proclaimed that the Redeemer would rule over all the earth. "He shall rule from sea to sea. . . . And all the kings of the earth shall adore him; all nations shall serve him" (Ps. LXXI, 8, 11). Many other circumstances in the life of the Redeemer were foretold by the prophets.

The Jewish people especially awaited the Redeemer with

longing, for it was to them the promises had first of all been made. They called Him the "Messias," that is, God's Anointed or Blessed One.

2. More than 1900 years ago Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem in the land of the Jews. Like all Israelites, He was descended from Abraham and belonged to the royal race of David. His birth was miraculous; for His Mother, Mary, was a virgin. The Archangel Gabriel had announced to her the birth of Jesus with the words: "Thou shalt . . . bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High. The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever [*i. e.*, over the chosen people of God, in the Church]; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke I, 31–33). When Mary asked: "How shall this be done?" the angel answered: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke I, 35). Thus Jesus had a human mother, but no father. St. Joseph, the virginal spouse of Our Lady, was only His foster-father; His true progenitor was God the Father.

When Jesus was born, God sent an angel to announce to some shepherds in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem that the Redeemer had come, and by a star informed certain wise men in the East of His advent. The shepherds and the wise men, filled with joy, came to adore Jesus. On the fortieth day after His birth the Child was presented in the Temple in accordance with the law, and on this occasion the aged prophet Simeon greeted Jesus as the Salvation sent by God, as the Light of the world (Luke II, 30–32). When He was twelve years, Jesus, among the doctors in the temple, manifested a wisdom that filled all with astonishment. For the rest, Jesus spent

His youth in modest retirement in the home of His parents at Nazareth.

At the age of thirty Jesus began to wander about and preach in the land of the Jews. He commenced His first sermon with the words: "The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark I, 15). By these words He declared Himself to be the expected Messias. He was acknowledged as such by His constant companions, the Apostles. Peter confessed his faith, saying: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God!" ["Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messias."] Jesus praised Peter for this confession. Again, at the end of His life, when He stood before the Sanhedrin, Jesus declared that He was the Messias. For when the High Priest commanded: "I adjure thee before the living God, to say whether thou art the Son of God?"—He answered: "Thou hast said it, I am he." Jesus performed all the miracles which Isaias had prophesied of the Redeemer. The people flocked to Him full of enthusiasm. But He was envied and hated by the powerful ones in the land, by the high priests, doctors, and Pharisees, who condemned Him to death as a criminal and crucified Him. All that David and Isaias had prophesied concerning the Passion of the Redeemer was fulfilled to the letter. At the Last Supper Jesus instituted a sacrifice similar to that of Melchisedech, except that it was incomparably higher. He died at the exact time the prophet Daniel had foretold and rose again from the dead as David had predicted, ascended into Heaven, and now governs the whole world and is worshipped everywhere.

3. Already during His life on earth Jesus was called by many the Messias or Christ. After His Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, He was generally spoken of as "Jesus the Christ" or Jesus Christ. From the fact that all the prophecies were fulfilled so magnificently in Him, we also know that Jesus

is the Redeemer whom God had promised from the beginning. Therefore we must follow Him if we want to be children of God and to be happy for all eternity.

How do we know that Jesus Christ is the promised Redeemer?

We know that Jesus Christ is the promised Redeemer by this, that all things foretold by the prophets have been fulfilled in Him.

Who is the Mother of Jesus Christ?

The Mother of Jesus Christ is the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Who is the Father of Jesus Christ?

The Father of Jesus Christ is God the Father; St. Joseph was only His foster-father.

The life of Christ may be read in detail in the four Gospels.

The Messianic Prophecies

To the present day the Jews possess the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament containing the prophecies concerning the Messias. But they refuse to believe that Jesus is the Messias to whom these prophecies refer, and those among their number who are not entirely infidel, still expect the Messias. In recent times, however, many Jews have been led by the prophecies of the Old Testament to believe in Jesus Christ. For example, the renowned preacher of St. Stephen's in Vienna, John Emmanuel Veith (+1876), came from a Jewish family. When a boy, he used to read his father's books, among them the Bible. While studying medicine at the University of Vienna, he attended a lecture given by a member of the theological faculty. To his great surprise he heard quoted prophetical passages from the Old Testament concerning the coming Redeemer that he had never heard before nor even read in his father's Bible, which, having an excellent memory, he knew almost by heart. As soon as he arrived home he went to see whether these prophecies were also in his father's Bible; and behold, the places where these passages should have been had strips of paper pasted over them. Emmanuel was about to remove these strips, when he was surprised by his father, who boxed his ears soundly. After this Emmanuel was determined to study the

prophecies and find out whether they had been fulfilled in Jesus. He also examined the Christian religion and came to the conclusion that it was the only true one. He became a Catholic and later on a priest (Donin, *"Kirchenhistorische Analekten,"* V, Graz, 1878, p. 269).

CHAPTER XIII

Jesus Christ the Son of God—Who Gives Testimony to His Divinity

1. Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is descended from Abraham and David through His Mother Mary. At the same time He is the true Son of God. He called Himself the "only begotten" Son of God when He said: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John III, 16).

Jesus calls Himself the only begotten Son of God because He is the true and only Son of God. We are adopted children of God if we possess sanctifying grace. Because Jesus Christ is the true Son of God, He is true God. Thus Jesus Christ has two natures: He is true man and true God. He is God from all eternity. About 1900 years ago He assumed a human body and a human soul in order to redeem mankind. He is now the God-man, God and man at the same time.

2. Centuries before His coming it was foretold by the prophets that the Redeemer would be God. Thus we read in Isaias: "God himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened . . ." (Is. XXXV, 4–6). "For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace" (Is. IX, 6).

The archangel Gabriel, sent by God, announced to the Mother of Jesus Christ that her Son would be God. For Gabriel

said: "He [thy Son] shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High. . . . The Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke I, 32–35).

When Jesus at the age of thirty years entered upon His public life, His Heavenly Father bore testimony to Him by the River Jordan: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matth. III, 17). God the Father repeated this testimony when Jesus was transfigured on a mountain (Matth. XVII, 5).

3. Jesus Himself declared on many occasions that He was God. He uttered many sentences that would have been impossible to Him had He not been true God, and He made promises that only God can make. For example, He promised the Apostles He would send down the Holy Ghost from Heaven (John XV, 26; XVI, 7). Again, He said to the Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost! Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John XX, 22–23). To Peter He said: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (Math. XVI, 19). Before His Ascension Jesus said to His Apostles: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations. . . . And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matth. XXVIII, 18–20). To the Jews Jesus said: "Before Abraham was made, I am" (John VIII, 58). As man, Jesus was born about 2,000 years after Abraham; as God, He was before Abraham. Again Jesus said to the Jews: "I and the Father are one" (John X, 30). The Jews knew very well that in uttering these words Jesus declared Himself to be God. They said He was pretending to be God, whereas He was no more than a man, and decided to stone Him. To Martha, when her brother Lazarus was dead, Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that be-

lieveth in me, although he be dead, shall live" (John XI, 25). He asserted His Divinity in the most positive manner when He stood before the Sanhedrin. The president of that high council, Caiphas, asked Him: "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us if thou be the Christ the Son of God." Jesus answered: "Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matth. XXVI, 63–65); Mark XIV, 61–62). For this solemn declaration Jesus was condemned to death; but He did not take back His words.

4. Among men, Jesus knew best the Apostles, who always accompanied Him. When He asked them whom they believed Him to be, Peter answered: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matth. XVI, 16). After the Ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles testified before all the world that Jesus was the Son of God, and gave their lives for the truth of this testimony.

Another witness of the Divinity of Christ is the Catholic Church. She has testified since the time of the Apostles, for almost 1900 years, that Jesus is the Son of God. With her many millions of believers have borne testimony and hundreds of thousands have sacrificed their lives.

5. Thus we have the surest and most reliable witnesses to the truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and true God. Let us join in their mighty testimony, saying to Jesus: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God! We adore Thee. We rely upon every word Thou hast spoken. We will faithfully obey Thy commandments. We will belong entirely to Thee!"

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God the Father. He is true God and true man. He is the Redeemer sent us by God.

Who testifies to us that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and true God?

That Jesus Christ is the Son of God and true God, is testified by the Heavenly Father, by Jesus Christ Himself, by His Apostles and by His Church.

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CHAPTER XIV

The Credibility of Christ's Own Testimony to His Divinity

If any other person were to assert that he was the Son of God he would not be believed. But Jesus Christ's declaration was believed by all men of good will. Why? Because:

1. In the life and death of Jesus and in His glorification it was clearly apparent that He was *the Redeemer* promised by God, and people could not but believe the God-sent Redeemer.

2. Jesus Christ lived the *holiest life* ever lived by any man. People saw that He was utterly unselfish and that He sacrificed Himself entirely for the honour of God and the salvation of men. They saw His love of the poor and the afflicted, His incomparable meekness. His humility was truly touching. He who possessed power over all nature, over illness and death, and whom angels served, humbly washed the feet of His disciples! He practised all virtues in the highest degree. He had no faults. When He asked His enemies: "Which one of you can accuse me of sin?" they had nothing to reproach Him with. Even Judas said: "I have betrayed innocent blood!" Pilate, while condemning Jesus to death, confessed: "I find no guilt in Him." A man so holy as Jesus was, could not be a liar and deceiver, and when He said that He was the Son of God, He spoke truly.

3. Jesus performed *miracles,* that is, extraordinary works that could only be done through the omnipotence of God. He healed

innumerable people of diseases that were quite incurable, and this in most cases by merely pronouncing a few words; He restored the dead to life; twice He fed a large multitude with a few loaves and fishes; He commanded the sea and the storm, arose from the grave, and gave to His Apostles the power to work miracles. The impression made by these miracles can be gathered from the words of the distinguished councillor Nicodemus: "Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do these signs which thou dost, unless God be with him" (John III, 2). If Jesus had not spoken the truth, God surely would not have given Him the power to work miracles. Because of His miracles, people believed Jesus when He said that He was the Son of God.

4. Jesus *foretold future events,* which only God could know, for instance, His Passion and Resurrection. When He went to Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Pasch, He said to His Apostles: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man; for he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon: and after they have scourged him, they will put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again" (Luke XVIII, 31–33). At the Last Supper Jesus foretold that Judas would betray Him and that Peter would deny Him thrice before the second cock-crow. He also foretold His Ascension, the descent of the Holy Ghost (John VI, 62; XVI, 7–15), and the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke XIX, 41–44). He predicted the expansion of His Church (Matth. XIII, 31–32), that she would never be overcome by the powers of hell (Matth. XVI, 18), and that His Gospel would be preached throughout the world (Matth. XXIV, 14). All these prophecies have been fulfilled to the letter.

For all these reasons we know that Jesus was sent by God and spoke the truth. Therefore we believe every word that He has spoken, including the testimony He gave of Himself,—

that He is the Son of God. We believe in Jesus Christ, Our Lord, the only-begotten Son of the Father.

How did Jesus prove that He is true God?

Jesus Christ proved that He is true God by His miracles and prophecies.

CHAPTER XV

How Jesus Christ Taught

His Heavenly Father laid upon Jesus Christ a threefold office:—that of prophet or teacher, to teach us the way to Heaven; that of a priest, to offer up for us the sacrifice of the Redemption; and that of a king, to found a new kingdom of God upon earth.

1. Jesus performed the work of a teacher during the last three years of His life by going about the country of the Jews preaching the Gospel. He inculcated a much more exact knowledge of God, eternity, and the way to Heaven than men had ever received before. He taught them how good and merciful God really is. He taught them that in God there are three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that He —Jesus—was the Second Person. He taught them that, to attain Heaven, they must keep the Commandments. He taught them to keep the Commandments more perfectly than they were kept in the Old Covenant, namely, not merely outwardly, but by governing the inner life in accordance with their dictates. Jesus taught virtues that were unknown or but little known up to that time: the love of God and neighbour, the spirit of poverty, humility and meekness, purity of heart, patience in suffering. All these virtues He inculcated, not only by word, but by example. He taught that through prayer and the Sacraments we can obtain from God the strength to walk on the road that leads to Heaven. He declared that He was come to found a Kingdom of God upon earth—the Church—and that He would commit to this Church His work of teaching. In return He required

that all men should believe His teaching and obey His Church. "He that believeth not shall be condemned," He said (Mark XVI, 16).

Usually Jesus had a large number of people around Him listening to His teaching. Some went with Him from place to place in order that they might hear Him more frequently. These were called disciples. He chose twelve of them to be His "Apostles," that is, messengers or ambassadors, for He intended later to send them into every country to preach His doctrine.

3. But Jesus also had a great many enemies, who refused to render Him obedience and the sacrifices He demanded of them. Some were too proud to believe in Him. Especially the leaders of the people, the high priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, were unwilling to submit themselves to Him. They envied Him because the people flocked to Him; they hated Him because He spoke the truth and laid bare the malice in their hearts; nay, they even attempted to put Him to death. They turned the majority of the people against Him and it was only after the death of Jesus, when He sent the Holy Ghost from Heaven, that His teaching began to spread with wondrous rapidity.

4. Christ's teaching was intended for the people of *all ages;* also for us, therefore. Millions, nay, hundreds of millions have become happy and found the way to Heaven through the teaching of Jesus. Yet even to-day His doctrine is hated and despised by many, either because they dread the self-conquest required of them, or because they are too proud to obey Jesus and His Church. He who does not wish to accept the teaching of Christ robs himself of the greatest consolation there is on earth and of eternal beatitude in Heaven. But they who believe in Jesus and follow Him find in His doctrine even in this life a happiness and peace such as the world cannot give and experience more

and more the truth of the words: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John XIV, 6).

To Whom Should We Go?

Once Jesus addressed to His Apostles and the people a doctrine which they failed to understand. He told them that He would give them His Flesh and Blood as food and drink. They could not imagine how that could be. They should have thought: "We will trust in Jesus, even when He tells us things which we do not understand." But many among them were too proud and simply would not trust in His word. These now left Him, never to return. Then Jesus asked the Apostles: "Will you also go away?" Peter answered Him in the name of all: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. We have believed and have known, that thou art the Christ [*i. e.,* the expected Messias], the Son of God" (John VI, 69–70). Let us also say: "To whom shall I go? In whom shall I trust? Jesus alone has the words of eternal life. O, Jesus, I believe in Thee, for I know Thou art the Son of God! Be Thou my Teacher and my Guide."

The Divine Seed Falls on Good Ground

Tchang-lin-we-tse is a little village in the Kiangnam Mission in China. About forty families lived there in happy seclusion, governed by two elders, one of whom was blind. The two frequently talked about T'ien-tchu-t'ang, *i. e.,* the Temple of the Lord of Heaven, as the Catholic Church is called in China. Missionaries had come into the neighbourhood and strange reports had spread in regard to their teaching. Drawn partly by curiosity, partly by an inner call of grace, the two old men resolved to obtain more definite information and to this end went to see a catechist who lived in a neighbouring village. This was in the year 1898. After they had exchanged the usual greetings and polite formalities, they drank tea together and chatted about one thing and another, not, however, about the object of their visit. It was only a short time before their departure that the blind elder shyly referred to the subject of religion and expressed the desire to know more about the teaching of the T'ien-tchu-t'ang. "Very good, Mr. Si-ju-liang," answered the catechist, "here is a little book; take it with you,

have it read to you at home, and if you do not understand everything, come back again." They departed with innumerable salaams and expressions of mutual esteem,—for such is the custom in China. The booklet disappeared within the wide sleeve that serves the Chinaman as a pocket, and the two old men strolled homeward, well pleased.

At the entrance to the village the children ran to meet them, and the mothers and daughters stood in the doorways, watching for them. These asked: "What are you bringing us, grandfather?" But the two elders were silent. When the men of the village returned from the fields in the evening the blind patriarch invited them to his house, drew forth the mysterious little book, and handed it to the schoolmaster, the only scholar in the neighbourhood. The reading lasted well into the night. It contained the simple, clear truths of the catechism, heard for the first time and with astonishment by these poor men, to whom they revealed an entirely new world of ideas. The blind man was the most enlightened among them. Though much that was read seemed new, much sounded true and consonant with that which God has written in every human heart. The blind elder remarked later on to the missionary in his touching, childlike way: "My mind was enlightened; it seemed to me that Jesus and His holy Mother Mary had been known to me always." For several days the catechism was read and reread, meditated upon, discussed. Their concluding opinion was: "We will all be instructed in the new doctrine and abandon our idols" (*Katholische Missionen,* 1906, p. 134).

CHAPTER XVI

How the Son of God Redeemed Mankind

The Son of God came into the world in order to redeem mankind.

1. All men had lost the grace of God and were excluded from eternal happiness through the sin of Adam and largely also through their own sins. It was impossible for men to atone for their sins; for when man revolts against the infinitely great God who created him and from whom all good comes, he is guilty of an enormous crime; when man turns away from God, his Creator and loving Father, the Devil has to be reckoned with. The whole human race would have been lost for ever if God had not had mercy.

2. God did have mercy on mankind. He sent His only-begotten Son to atone for our sins. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, obeyed His Father in the most perfect way every moment of His life. In obedience to His Father He died on the Cross and thus atoned for our disobedience. He sacrificed Himself on the Cross to His Father, and in this way brought Him unending glory and atoned for the outrages man had perpetrated against God. Moreover Christ voluntarily suffered on the cross the punishment which we had merited. This obedience, sacrifice and atonement was most pleasing to the Father in Heaven; through it Jesus saved us from eternal damnation and merited for us innumerable graces and eternal happiness. Thus *Jesus redeemed us* and fulfilled the office of priest, laid upon Him by His Father.

That Jesus redeemed us by His suffering and death He has

told us in the following words: "The Son of man is come . . . to give His life a redemption for many" (Matth. XX, 28). And at the Last Supper He said: "This is my body that will be offered up for you. . . . This is my blood that will be shed for you and for many in atonement for sins." The name "Jesus" means "Redeemer" or "Saviour." St. Paul says that we were saved by the obedience of Jesus: "For as by the disobedience of one man [*i. e.,* Adam], many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just" (Rom. V, 19).

3. God could redeem us *because He was both God and man.* Being man, He could obey, suffer, and die for us; being God, His obedience, suffering, and death had infinite merit. Only God in His infinite wisdom could have devised this plan.

4. Let us be *grateful* to the Son of God for the immeasurable love with which He sacrificed Himself for us! "Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friends," Jesus Himself tells us (John XV, 13). Let us thank Him for this love by giving ourselves entirely to Him. Holy Scripture exhorts us: "Christ died for all; that they also who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. V, 15). Therefore let us frequently say with our whole heart: "Jesus, I live for Thee; Jesus, I die for Thee; I am Thine in life and in death!" Only if we belong to Jesus in love, have we a share in the Redemption.

As often as we make the *sign of the cross,* let us remember with gratitude our Saviour's death! Let the sign of the cross be our ensign, the flag under which we battle and gain Heaven.

Why did the Son of God become man?

The Son of God became man to suffer and die for us and thus to redeem us.

How did Jesus Christ redeem us by His Passion and death?

Jesus Christ redeemed us by His Passion and death by

atoning for our sins and meriting for us God's grace and eternal salvation.

The Liberated Slave

In the year 1891 Fr. Allaire, a missionary of the Society of the Holy Ghost, travelled up the Maringa River in the Congo State (Africa) in order to ransom slaves, especially children. Most of these unfortunate children were fattened by their masters to be slain and consumed on festive occasions. The fate of adult slaves was equally sad. Many were cruelly put to death in honour of the tribal idols; often when a chief died, whole bands of slaves were slain and consumed at the funeral. Under the law the missionaries could only ransom children, because the government (the Congo State was and is united with Belgium) reserved to itself the ransoming of adults.

During the above-mentioned journey Fr. Allaire stopped one evening in a little village, intending to spend the night there. He gives the following account of his experience:

"Night had come on, and I was silently saying the rosary when a strong, rather youngish man was led to me and offered for sale. 'No,' I answered, 'you know I only buy children. The man is too big, I cannot use him.'

"The men were disappointed and resolved to spend the night in the village, as they could not think of returning through the woods in the darkness. The owner of the slave, thinking his fetters were not strong enough, took some thick lianas (a creeper plant attaining to the thickness of a cable), and bound the feet of the unlucky man in such a manner that the tips of his toes were opposite, but unable to touch one another. The hands were bound in a similar position. Meanwhile I had finished my rosary and lay down to sleep. Presently I heard a low groan, which was repeated at brief intervals. At first I paid no heed to it; but in the end I could no longer bear it and got up to see what was the matter. It was the poor slave whom I had refused to ransom. I at once awakened his master, who lay beside him fast asleep, and reproached him earnestly. But he replied: 'Do you not know that if this strong youth could move his hands or feet, he would pull off the cords and escape? It does not matter if he suffers, for he is only a slave and it won't kill him.' With this the master lay

down to sleep again. Indignant at such callousness, I took my knife and cut the cords one after the other. Then I turned to the owner, who had looked on dumbfounded, and asked: 'How much do you want for this man?' 'A hundred brass rods;' was the answer. 'Good, I shall pay you immediately. This man is now free and belongs to you no longer.' Then, turning to the youth, I said, 'Tomorrow you may go back to your native village. Come, I will give you some food, and then you will be able to sleep. But you may go home this evening if you want to.'

"The next morning the liberated slave was waiting for me to awake, when he said in a beseeching tone: 'Yesterday you said I could return to my native village. But, O white man, you, who have cut my fetters, are my village.' 'No,' I replied, 'I have only paid your ransom. You are free and you owe me nothing. Go now; you are far too big for me to take you with me.' 'What! Must I go away?' he exclaimed despairingly. 'No, never! I will follow you wherever you go, until you beat me so that I cannot go farther.' His voice sounded so sincere that I took him on board with me. He remained constantly by my side. But unfortunately at the next Belgian station the commander of the Belgian frontier retained him, and placed him in the army."

How beautiful is the gratitude and loyalty of this slave! Yet Jesus ransomed us from a far worse slavery and paid an incomparably higher ransom for us. How grateful and loyal to Jesus we should be!

CHAPTER XVII

What Jesus Suffered for Us

"Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried (fourth article of the Creed).

Throughout His whole life Jesus suffered much want, distress, and persecution. But He suffered most at the end of His life.

I. Jesus voluntarily took upon Himself His sufferings and death in order to save us. When He was going for the last time to Jerusalem for the festival of Easter, He said to His Apostles: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man. For he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon: and after they have scourged him, they will put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again" (Luke XVIII, 31–33). If Jesus had wanted to avoid His Passion, He might have done so simply by not going to Jerusalem. On Mount Olivet, when His enemies were prepared to seize Him, He did not escape, but rather went to meet them. When He spoke to them, they fell prostrate to the ground. Thus He first revealed to them His divine power and then permitted them to make Him prisoner. When brought before the judges, Jesus did not try to have Himself acquitted. Without protest or complaint He submitted to be scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified. The prophet Isaias had foretold: "He is offered because it is his own will, and he openeth not his mouth, like a lamb that is led to slaughter."

II. The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary bring to our mind the following chief points in the Passion of Christ:

1. *"Jesus, who sweat blood for us."* On Mount Olivet Jesus endured the agony of death and shed drops of blood like sweat,—so terrible was His dread of the awful suffering which in His omniscience He foresaw. Yet more terrible was the agony caused by the sins of men, which He was to take upon Himself and for which He was to atone. Let us be sorry for our sins, which brought such agony and terror to our Divine Saviour!

2. *"Jesus, who was scourged for us."* After Jesus had been condemned to death by the High Council, He was led before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to have the sentence confirmed by the latter. Pilate found no guilt in Him, yet permitted that He should be scourged. He thought the Jews would be satisfied with this. Scourging was such a terrible punishment that many collapsed under it and died. It is believed that Jesus suffered this torture especially for those who give their bodies to shameful pleasures. Let us abhor those sins on account of which Jesus suffered so cruelly!

3. *"Jesus, who was crowned with thorns for us!"* The rough soldiers who had scourged Jesus, now made Him the victim of a cruel joke. They clothed Him in a red mantle, put a crown of thorns upon His head, placed a rod in His hand, and then pretended to do Him royal homage. They bent their knees before Him, spit in His face, and drove the thorny crown deeper and deeper into His forehead. This dreadful mockery Jesus suffered for the benefit of those proud and vain persons who are constantly intent upon being honoured and admired. Can we bear our heads so high if we remember how Christ suffered and was cruelly reviled for our sake?

4. *"Jesus, who carried His heavy cross for us."* Pilate, goaded on by the Jews, condemned Jesus to death against his own conviction; he condemned Him to the most shameful of all

deaths, by crucifixion. At once Jesus was led to the place of execution. He Himself carried the cross on which He was to die. But He was full of wounds and quite exhausted. Therefore He often stumbled beneath the cross. Yet the soldiers forced Him to arise again and again and carry His cross. Since Jesus, the Most Holy, bore so heavy a cross, it is fitting that we sinners also should bear a cross. Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matth. XVI, 24). Let us bear our cross patiently because Jesus asks us to do so: let us bear it for love of Him:

5. *"Jesus, who was crucified for us!"* When Jesus at last reached Mount Calvary, He was nailed to the cross, and the cross raised upright. For hours He hung in this position suffering the most terrible agony. During this time He was still mocked by His enemies. At last He bowed His Head and died. "[He] loved me, and delivered himself for me!" says St. Paul (Gal. II, 20), and each one of us can say the same. Let us be eternally grateful to Jesus for His great love of us; let us love Him above all else and dedicate ourselves to Him eternally!" My Jesus, I live for Thee; my Jesus, I die for Thee; my Jesus, I am Thine, in life and in death!"

When we consider what Jesus suffered, we should think most of the love which inspired Him and repent of our sins which caused His suffering.

"My Saviour, 'twas my sins, on Calvary
Betrayed and scourged and bartered Thee.
With cruel thorns they crowned Thy Sacred Head
And nailed Thee to the cross, Redeemer Mine.

Alas! my heart is filled with sorrow deep!
My Saviour! Lowly do I pray and weep.
Let not Thy death and agony of pain
Be offered up, and spent for me in vain."

(Tr. by E. J. G.)

The Grateful Negro

A missionary from Guinea (Africa) relates the following: One day our children came running breathless to the station with the news, "There is a man dying on the shore!" I hastened to the spot, and there on the seashore I instructed the dying man. Presently I saw his last hour had not yet arrived, and I carried the new catechumen on my back to the mission, which was not very far away. It was Good Friday. When the sick man heard of the mystery we commemorated on this day, he became attentive, collected all his faculties, and said in a moved voice: "Minisse" [*i. e.,* Master, the form of salutation customary in those parts], "did Jesus Christ die for the niggers also?"

"Yes, He died especially for great sinners."

"Oh, if Jesus Christ died for me too," the dying man said with evident emotion, "I will die for Him. Baptize me, Father, that I may die for Jesus on the same day that He died for me."

Moved and gladdened by such sincere love of the crucified Saviour, I complied with his fervent request and at once administered to this well-disposed man the Sacrament of Baptism, which he received with true fervour. It was not long before his penitent and purified spirit left his body, and his earnest desire to die for and with the suffering Saviour was fulfilled. This happened on Good Friday about three o'clock in the afternoon. We did not know and never found out whence this black man came; we never heard of any relatives or friends of his.

CHAPTER XVIII

How Jesus Arose from the Dead

He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead (fifth article of the Creed).

At the death of Jesus there were great miracles. The sun was hidden, the earth quaked, rocks were cleft asunder, graves opened, and the great veil of the Temple was rent in two. These miracles were a further proof that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. But the greatest proof of all was His Resurrection.

Jesus truly rose from the dead, for:

1. He had actually died. The Gospel expressly tells us: "He bowed His head and died." Witnesses of His death were His friends, who stood, some under the cross and others close by; and His enemies, who did not depart until they were sure that He was dead. The soldiers, too, witnessed His death; their captain announced the fact to Pilate. Before the body of Christ was taken down from the cross, a soldier pierced His heart with a lance. If there had been any doubt as to His death, it would have been removed by this test.

2. Jesus as truly *rose from the dead on the third day.* The guards whom His enemies had posted by His tomb did not themselves see the risen Saviour; but they were thrown to the ground by an earthquake and they saw an angel descend from Heaven and roll away the stone that closed the entrance to the tomb. They saw the tomb empty. The first to see the risen Saviour were the pious women who went to the tomb to anoint His sacred body; the next was Peter; then the two disciples going

to Emmaus; then the Apostles, in the midst of whom Jesus appeared; then a great many of His disciples; 500 together on one occasion alone.

The most reliable witnesses of the Resurrection that we could desire to have were the Apostles. For the risen Saviour came to them often, permitted them to touch Him, and ate with them in order to convince them of His Resurrection. The Apostles were anything but credulous. They did not believe the women who first brought the news that Jesus had arisen; they did not even believe Peter, nor the two disciples who met Him going to Emmaus; and even when Jesus Himself appeared among them, they did not believe at once, for they thought He was a ghost. When the other ten Apostles told Thomas they had seen Jesus, Thomas did not believe it until he himself had seen Him and Jesus had shown him His wounds. But once the Apostles were convinced, their conviction was so firm that they announced the Resurrection of Jesus with the greatest enthusiasm to Jews and gentiles and joyfully suffered death for Jesus' sake.

3. On one occasion Jesus said to the Jews: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John II, 19). He fulfilled this prophecy when He arose from the dead. By His Resurrection He triumphantly demonstrated that He was *true God.* Jesus had also promised: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live" (John XI, 25). To strengthen us in the hope of our future resurrection, Jesus Himself "is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep" (1 Cor. XV, 20).

CHAPTER XIX

The Glorification of Jesus—His Second Coming

"He ascended into Heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead." (Sixth and seventh articles of the Creed.) [I believe in] "the resurrection of the body." (Eleventh article of the Creed).

1. We are told in the Holy Scripture that Jesus "humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Philipp. II, 8–10). The exaltation of Jesus began with His Resurrection. He was further exalted when, forty days after His Resurrection, He ascended into Heaven in the presence of His disciples. There He sits "at the right hand of His Father," that is, with His Father He rules the world. But the exaltation of Jesus will not be completed until His second coming on the Day of Judgment.

2. On that day He will first awaken the dead to life. "The hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good things, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment," that is, of eternal damnation (John V, 28–29). Jesus by His omnipotence will raise the bodies of men to life even though their ashes

have long ago been scattered to the winds. Simultaneously the souls will come from Heaven, Purgatory, and hell and reanimate these bodies. The bodies of the just will be transfigured with glory, whereas the bodies of the wicked will be loathsome and disfigured (1 Cor. XV, 42–44, 45). This is the "resurrection of the body."

Because our bodies are destined to rise again and share in the eternal happiness of Heaven, the Church buries them reverently and amid prayers in the ground where they will dissolve, and she will not have them destroyed by violence, *e. g.*, by cremation. Cremation is strictly forbidden. If anyone orders his body to be burned after death, he will be denied ecclesiastical burial.

3. After the resurrection of the body will come the *Last Judgment,* also called the General Judgment. Jesus described it as follows: "When the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty: And all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you covered me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee; thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and covered thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? And the king, answering, shall say to them: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. Then he shall say to

them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you covered me not; sick and in prison, and you did not visit me. Then they also shall answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then he shall answer them saying: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment: but the just, into life everlasting" (Matth. XXV, 31–46).

4. No one of us shall be absent from this judgment. Each will stand either on the right or on the left! Let us do good while there is yet time! Above all, let us believe in Jesus and be faithful to Him! For Jesus has said: "He that doth not believe [in the Son of God] is already judged" (John III, 18). "Abide in me and I in you . . . I am the vine; you the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. If anyone abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth" (John XV, 4–6). Let us consider also the promise made by Jesus: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up [to eternal life] in the last day. . . . He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John VI, 55, 57).

From the "Dies Irae"

[The "Dies Irae" is recited or sung after the epistle in Masses said for the dead].

Nigher still, and still more nigh
Draws the day of prophecy,
Doomed to melt the earth and sky.

Hark! the trump, with thrilling tone,
From sepulchral regions lone,
Summons all before the throne:

Now, before the Judge severe,
Hidden things must all appear;
Nought can pass unpunish'd here.

What shall guilty I then plead?
Who for me will intercede,
When the saints shall comfort need?

Recollect, O Love divine,
'Twas for this lost sheep of thine
Thou thy glory didst resign:

Thou wast wearied seeking me;
Sufferedst upon the tree:
Let not vain thy labour be.

Judge of justice, hear my prayer;
Spare me, Lord, in mercy spare;
Ere the reckoning-day appear.

When the cursed in anguish flee
Into flames of misery;
With the blest then call Thou me.

Suppliant in the dust I lie;
My heart a cinder, crush'd and dry;
Help me, Lord, when death is nigh.[1]

[1] On this beautiful sequence see Nicholas Gihr, *Dies Irae,* tr. by J. J. Schmit, St. Louis, 1927.

CHAPTER XX

The Holy Ghost—His Work in the Church

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." (Eighth article of the Creed.)

1. We have been taught by Jesus Christ (cfr. Matth. XXVIII, 19; John XVI, 7–15) and by His Apostles (cfr. 1 Cor. XII, 4–11) that there is in God, besides the Father and the Son, a *Third Person,* namely, the Holy Ghost. He is the same God as the Father and the Son. He possesses omnipotence, omniscience, and all the other divine attributes just as the Father and the Son. Therefore, we must honour and worship the Holy Ghost in the same way that we honour and worship the Father and the Son.

2. When at the Last Supper Jesus told His Apostles that He would soon return to His Father, He promised them: "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth" (John XIV, 16–17). Again, before His Ascension, He said to His Apostles: "Stay you in the city [Jerusalem], till you be endued with power from on high" (Luke XXIV, 49). Therefore, after the Ascension, the Apostles remained with the Mother of Jesus and many of His disciples in Jerusalem, and prayed without ceasing. On the tenth day after the Ascension, which was the Jewish Pentecost, there suddenly came from Heaven a blowing as of a storm. Flames appeared above those assembled, and descended upon each in the form of a tongue of fire. And all were filled with the Holy Ghost. A large number of pilgrims from different countries had assembled in Jerusalem for the

festival. When they heard the storm blowing, they crowded round the house where the Apostles were. The Apostles came out and spoke to them of Jesus Christ in every language, telling them how He had arisen from the dead and now had *sent the Holy Ghost.* Seeing this miracle, 3,000 Jews were converted and baptized.

3. Since that time the Holy Ghost has remained with the Apostles and their successors and worked great and glorious things *in the Church.* Through the Holy Ghost whole nations, hearing the Apostles and their followers preach, were converted to Christ. The Holy Spirit continued to teach and enlighten the Church that it might faithfully preach the doctrine of Christ and direct men on the road to Heaven. When the Church administers the Sacraments, it is the Holy Ghost who imparts grace to the recipients. He is the soul of the Church, always animating it and imparting to it youth and the sap of life. All the good things we receive at the hands of the Church are gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the third Divine Person; he is true God.

Prayer to the Holy Ghost

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy people and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray! O God, who by the light of the Holy Ghost didst on this day instruct the hearts of the faithful: grant us in the same Spirit to relish what is right and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to the Holy Ghost

(From the Mass of Whitsun)

Holy Spirit! Lord of Light!
From Thy clear, celestial height!
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Come, Thou Father of the poor!
Come, with treasures which endure.
Come, Thou Light of all that live.

Thou, of all consolers best,
Visiting the troubled breast,
Dost refreshing peace bestow.

Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.

Light immortal! Light divine!
Visit Thou these hearts of Thine,
And our inmost being fill.

If Thou take Thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay;
All his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew,
On our dryness pour Thy dew;
Wash the stains of guilt away.

Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on those who evermore
Thee confess and Thee adore,
In Thy sevenfold gifts descend.

Give them comfort when they die;
Give them life with Thee on high;
Give them joys which never end.

CHAPTER XXI

How the Holy Ghost Sanctifies Us by His Grace

1. When the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles at Pentecost, He effected a great change in them. Their minds were enlightened. All that Jesus had said they remembered and now understood clearly. Their hearts burned with love of Jesus and with zeal to carry out His commission and preach His doctrine. While formerly they had been timid, they now were filled with courage and joyfully bore, for Jesus' sake, imprisonment, scourging, and even death.

The Holy Ghost effects a similar change in us. He enlightens our intellect, so that we may understand the doctrine of Jesus and all our duties. He warms and inflames our hearts, that we may love God and joyfully do His will. He strengthens us, that we may stoutly resist temptations and remain faithful to Jesus. We call this help of the Holy Ghost *actual grace*. Without it we can accomplish nothing supernatural or celestial. "No one can say [devoutly]: Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. XII, 3). Of ourselves we can not think as much as one pious thought (2 Cor. III, 5). But the Holy Ghost imparts grace to us if we ask Him. He imparts it more abundantly whenever we receive a Sacrament with the right disposition. But we have to co-operate with the grace of the Holy Ghost and to strive to do good. Then the Holy Ghost will impart new graces, and help us to persevere until we die.

2. But the Holy Ghost bestows on us a still greater gift. St. Peter writes: "[Through Jesus Christ] he [God] hath

given us most great and precious promises: that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. I, 4). That is, in view of the fact that Jesus Christ died for us on the cross, the Holy Ghost pours into our souls something of the beauty and splendour of God, thus rendering them far more like to God than they already are by nature. He gives to the soul a new, higher, supernatural, celestial life. In this state our souls are so holy and pleasing to God that He adopts us as His children and makes us heirs of Heaven. St. John writes: "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God" (I John, III, 1). This celestial gift, by means of which we become holy and pleasing to God, His adopted children and heirs of Heaven, is called *sanctifying grace.* It is the greatest and most precious treasure which we can possess on earth.

We must faithfully preserve this treasure until death. Our eternal happiness depends wholly and entirely on whether we possess sanctifying grace at the moment of death. Sanctifying grace is lost through one mortal sin. Therefore, we must guard most carefully against mortal sin. But if we have had the misfortune to commit a mortal sin, we should immediately seek to efface it by contrition and penance. We can constantly increase sanctifying grace within us by good works and by the reception of the Sacraments. The more grace we possess, the greater will be our happiness in the next life. Jesus exhorts us: "Lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matth. VI, 20).

3. The Holy Ghost animates and inspires not only the Church, but also its individual members. As the sun awakens and promotes life everywhere in nature, so the Holy Ghost infuses a higher, spiritual life into souls. Let us open our souls freely to the rays of His grace. "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph. IV, 30). "Extinguish not the spirit" (1 Thess. V, 19). The Holy Ghost is driven out or "extinguished" if we neglect His grace or we set ourselves against it. Such resistance

is the surest way of losing eternal salvation (Matth. XII, 31).

4. To enable us to follow the inspirations of the Holy Ghost quite voluntarily, and to walk valiantly in the ways of God, the Holy Ghost gives us, if we zealously beseech Him, especially through the Sacrament of Confirmation, seven special gifts, namely: (1) wisdom, that we may seek our happiness in God; (2) understanding, that we may rightly understand the doctrine of Jesus; (3) counsel, that we may make a right choice in important decisions; (4) fortitude, that we may courageously overcome all obstacles in the way of salvation; (5) knowledge, that we may see the way to Heaven; (6) piety, that is, a childlike disposition towards God, our kind Father; (7) fear of the Lord, that is, a most profound reverence for our great Lord and Master. These gifts are more precious than all the wealth of the world.

How many kinds of grace do we receive from the Holy Ghost?

The grace of the Holy Ghost is twofold: (1) sanctifying grace; (2) actual grace.

What are the effects of sanctifying grace?

Sanctifying grace makes the soul holy and pleasing to God; it makes us children of God and heirs of Heaven.

What are the effects of actual grace?

Actual grace enlightens the understanding and disposes the will to do good.

Paul, a Miracle of Grace

St. Paul in his youth hated the Christian religion and persecuted those who believed in Jesus. He denounced them to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem and had them cast into prison. He even undertook a long journey to Damascus, intending to persecute the Christians there. But on his way a powerful light from Heaven suddenly enveloped him. Paul—or, as he was then called, Saul—fell to the ground in great fear. He heard a voice speaking to him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul asked: "Who

art thou, Lord?" The voice answered: "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." In a moment Paul was completely transformed. For several days his eyes were blind. But his soul was enlightened by the Holy Ghost. He remembered the miracles which Jesus had worked, he remembered that Jesus had arisen from the dead. And he knew that Jesus was the Son of God, that men must believe in Him, and how wrong and wicked he, Saul, had been in persecuting His followers. From this hour he believed in Jesus.

But the Holy Ghost also inflamed his heart with love of Jesus. Paul now wanted to belong entirely to and live for Him only. He had himself baptized and immediately began to preach the Gospel in Damascus. The Jews tried to put him to death. Paul saved himself by flight. Soon after he preached in other places. As a sign that he had become another man, he called himself "Paul" instead of "Saul" (Paul means "the lesser"). He was persecuted everywhere by Jews and pagans; he was scourged, cast into prison, stoned. But he said: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? . . . In all these things we overcome, because of him that hath loved us" (Rom. VIII, 35, 37). Such was his love of Jesus. The Holy Ghost had by His grace completely transformed him. Paul himself wrote: "By the grace of God, I am what I am" (I Cor. XV, 10).

Thus the Holy Ghost has transformed innumerable people by His grace. He will transform you also if you ask Him earnestly and co-operate zealously with His grace.

Co-operation with the Grace of the Holy Ghost

A missionary of the Apostolic Vicariate Jaffna, Ceylon, writes: The effect of grace sometimes makes itself felt in such a striking way that the priest, the frail instrument of these miracles, is stricken with amazement and his heart overflows with gratitude towards Him who is the source of all goodness. A few years ago I witnessed the baptism of a young pagan woman, whose conversion seems to be a direct work of the Holy Ghost. She belonged to a pagan village in the neighbourhood of Jaffna and to one of those high castes whose pride makes them despise and spurn the religion of strangers. Richly dressed and adorned with jewels, she came one day to Fr. Pelissier, O.M.I., the parish priest, and asked him to baptize her.

"Do you really want to be baptized?" the priest asked in as-

tonishment. "What reason have you for desiring to become a Christian?"

"I see that our religion is bad," the young pagan answered. "I have no confidence in our gods; they are wicked and teach evil things. I love the Christian religion because it is good and teaches what is good."

"But you come from a pagan village and belong to a good caste! What will happen to you if you become a Christian?"

"I shall not be able to return to the village. They will drive me away and I shall lose everything I have. But what does that matter? I must be a Christian. That is all I wish."

"Very well, my child. But you must first learn your prayers before you can receive the Sacrament of Baptism."

"My prayers? I know them all."

"Let me see. Make the sign of the cross."

She did so.

"Say the Our Father."

She said the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Creed, and so on. She repeated all the prayers required from one about to be received into the Catholic Church. The priest was astonished and said, "That is very good, my child. You have only the catechism to learn now."

"But, Father, I know all the catechism also," was the answer.

He questioned her and she knew it from beginning to end.

"How did you manage to learn all that?" asked the priest, moved by such astonishing preparation.

"A Christian woman gave me this book and said I had to learn it by heart before I could receive Baptism. I learned it in secret, and now that I know it, I have fled from my home and come to look for the priest."

There was no need to hesitate longer. Here was a soul fully prepared for the grace of Baptism. The following day she became a Christian. She was received into the mission and some time later married a good Catholic.

CHAPTER XXII

The Most Holy Trinity

1. Jesus Christ proclaimed to the world that there are three Persons in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. That they are truly three different and distinct Persons was seen at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, when Heaven opened and the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove. God the Father cried out from Heaven: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." If the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were not three distinct Persons, Jesus could not have said: "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, . . . the spirit of truth" (John XIV, 16–17).

These three Persons are called *Divine* Persons. They are truly Divine Persons and each one is God. The Son of God and the Holy Ghost are no less God than the Father. Therefore it is that Jesus decreed we should be baptized in the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the name of the Father. For He said to His Apostles: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matth. XXVIII, 19).

2. But the three Divine Persons are not three Gods, for there is but one God. "I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no God besides me" (Is. XLV, 5). Reason also tells us that there can be only one God, one supreme Lord. Therefore, the three Divine Persons are *one and the same God.* They are equally powerful and equally glorious, and we must honour and worship them in the same degree.

3. There are three Divine Persons, but there is only one Divine Essence. Therefore, we call God the tri-une God (three-in-one). The three Divine Persons are called *the Most Holy Trinity.*

Our weak intellect can never fully comprehend the infinitely great God. In particular we cannot grasp how God can be threefold in Person and only one in Being. The Holy Trinity will always remain a mystery to us. But we have the word of Jesus and His Church's teaching to guarantee this truth.

4. We confess our faith in the Divine Trinity and also in Jesus crucified, in the words: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen,** and by the sign of the cross by which these words are usually accompanied. The sign of the cross is made either by forming a cross with the thumb of the right hand on the forehead, on the mouth, and on the breast, or by touching with the right hand the forehead, breast, and the left and right shoulders, thus forming a large cross.

We can also offer adoration and thanks to the Most Holy Trinity by saying: **Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Although we should honour all three Divine Persons in the same degree, yet Jesus Christ and the Church teach us to give thanks to each of the Divine Persons for one particular benefit: to the Father for creating us, to the Son for redeeming us, and to the Holy Ghost for sanctifying us by His grace. This can be done with the words: *Glory be to the Father, who created me; and to the Son, who redeemed me; and to the Holy Ghost, who sanctified me. Amen.*

Is there more than one God?

There is only one God.

How many Persons are there in God?

There are three Persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Is each of the Divine Persons true God?

Each of the Divine Persons is true God.

What are the three Divine Persons together called?

The three Divine Persons together are called the Most Holy Trinity.

The Inner Life of the Most Holy Trinity

Regarding nature and attributes, there is no difference between the three Divine Persons; they are all the same God. But there is *one* infinitely important distinction between them. The Father derives His being from none other. The Son is from the Father; He was not created, for then He would not be God, but He was "begotten" from all eternity. For in the Psalms (II, 7) God speaks to the Son: "Thou art my Son; this day [to God all eternity is as a continuous day] have I begotten thee." But the Holy Ghost comes from the Father and the Son, also from all eternity. For Jesus said: "When the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of me" (John XV, 26).

In the light of this and other passages of Holy Scripture the theologians explain the relations between the Divine Persons as follows:

God the Father contemplates Himself. Because God is a spirit, this is an altogether spiritual inner contemplation. Through this self-contemplation God has within Himself an image of Himself. But as all is infinitely perfect in God, this image is not a dead but a living image; it is a second Divine Person, the Son of God. Thus the Son is "begotten" by the Father. Therefore, He is also called the "Word" of God (John I, 1). He is the Word that God speaks within Himself, the representation, the idea that God has of Himself. This inner Word, this idea of God, becomes the Son of God.

While God the Father and the Son contemplate their infinite glory, an infinite love of their beauty is kindled within them. This Love is again the most perfect and the highest that can be imagined. It is living, and is the Third Person of the Trinity, the

Holy Ghost. The expressions by which the Holy Ghost is designated in Greek, the original language of the New Testament, and in Latin, the official language of the Church, mean "breath" as well as "spirit." For in the Holy Ghost there is breathed the infinite, mutual Love of the Father and the Son.

Thus God is not only outwardly life and love, power and activity; there also flow within Him infinite streams of life, love, and activity. One day God will draw us into this indescribably happy life and love in Heaven, in so far as this is possible for creatures. It is this which constitutes eternal beatitude.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Catholic Church

[I believe in] the holy Catholic Church. (From the ninth article of the Creed).

1. Jesus Christ came down from Heaven to redeem us and lead us to eternal happiness. He desired that His work should be continued throughout all time. Therefore His doctrine was to be preached in all ages, His Sacraments were to be administered to all men, and all were to be exhorted to live according to His commandments. To this end *Jesus Christ founded a great community,* a Kingdom of God that was to include all countries and nations of every age, and which He called His *Church.* The Apostles were to be the directors and rulers of this Church. Jesus said to them: **"Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."— "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Matth. XXVIII, 19–20; Mark XVI, 16).**

The supreme Head of the Church, the King of God's Kingdom upon earth, is Jesus Christ Himself. But after His Ascension, Peter was to become His vicar and the visible head of the Church. In the presence of all the Apostles Jesus told Peter: **"Thou art Peter [i. e., the rock], and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not pre-**

vail against it. I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matth. XVI, 18–19).

By the Kingdom of Heaven here is meant the Kingdom of God upon earth, by the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, the chief power in the Church. After His Resurrection Jesus fulfilled this promise, bidding Peter: "Feed my lambs . . . feed my sheep" (John XXI, 15, 17). Thus Peter was appointed chief shepherd of Christ's flock.

2. The Church began to exist when Christ, on the tenth day after His Ascension, sent down the Holy Ghost. From that time the Apostles preached, administered the Sacraments, and guided the faithful as Jesus had commanded them. Soon the Church began to spread over the world and was called the "Catholic," that is, "Universal," Church.

The Church of Jesus Christ still stands today and in accordance with the command of its Divine Founder will stand till the end of the world. The bishops are the successors of the Apostles as directors of the Church. The part of the Church over which a bishop rules is called a "diocese." The priests are the helpers of the bishops. The successor of St. Peter as head of the Universal Church is the Bishop of Rome, because Peter had his seat in Rome and died there. The Bishop of Rome is called "Pope," that is, "Father"; he is also called "Holy Father." Pius XI is the 260th successor of St. Peter. Because the Bishop of Rome is the head of the Catholic Church, it is also called the "Roman Catholic Church."

3. To the Catholic Church belong all believing Christians, that is, all who are baptized and subject to the Pope and the bishops. The Pope and the bishops constitute the "teaching Church," the remainder, the "learning Church."

He who belongs to the Catholic Church belongs to the

Kingdom of God. If he follows her faithfully, he will be received into the Eternal Kingdom of God in Heaven. Therefore, the Church is, as it were, the forecourt of Heaven. For this very reason Jesus often referred to it as "the Kingdom of Heaven."

What is the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church is the communion of all believing Christians acknowledging the Pope as their head.

Who is the *visible* head of the Church?

The visible head of the Church is the successor of St. Peter, the Pope of Rome.

For what purpose did Christ found the Church?

Christ founded the Church that through her men should be led to eternal happiness.

Pius XI

Pius XI was born March 31, 1857, in Desio, a town about three hours' distant from Milan. His name was Achilles Ratti and he came of a respectable family of the middle class, engaged in the silk industry. He attended college in Milan, and, to the inexpressible joy of his mother, decided to devote himself to the priesthood. He made his philosophical and theological studies, partly in Milan and partly in Rome, and was ordained priest in the latter city in 1879. On account of his remarkable talents the Archbishop of Milan appointed him professor of rhetoric and Hebrew in the diocesan seminary. Besides this work, Ratti devoted himself zealously to the care of souls, especially of young people, and societies. In 1888 he was called to the famous library of St. Ambrose in Milan, where he worked for twenty-five years, the last seven as its director. To perfect this library he studied assiduously, visited the libraries of many great cities, and corresponded with numerous learned scholars. With unflagging zeal he improved the library and assisted readers in the most kindly manner. He himself composed a number of scholarly books. Besides his activities in the sphere of science, he also worked for the salvation of souls, especially among the high-school boys and among the Germans of Milan; he preached to them in German, heard their confessions,

and took part in their social meetings. Soon Father Ratti was the most popular priest in Milan. In 1912 he was called to the Vatican Library in Rome, perhaps the most magnificent in the world, of which he was director from 1913 till 1918.

In 1918 he was unexpectedly taken away from his scientific and pastoral activities and appointed papal legate to Poland, which had become an independent nation, to put in order the Church's relations which had suffered horribly under the Russian oppression. Here he proved himself to be an excellent statesman. In 1921 Pope Benedict XV nominated him Archbishop of Milan and soon after Cardinal.[1]

Before a year had elapsed, Benedict XV died, and on the 6th of February, 1922, Cardinal Ratti was elected Pope and took the name Pius XI. Although he was in his 65th year, he still had the freshness of youth, which was due to his simple mode of life and the mountain sports in which he had engaged during his vacations.

The predecessor of the present Holy Father, Benedict XV, did everything he could in the terrible World War to induce the nations to make peace; and when unfortunately he did not succeed he took measures to relieve the suffering caused by the War. For example, he encouraged and carried through the plan of exchanging prisoners incapacitated for war and of sending invalid soldiers to Switzerland to recover their health there. He constantly sent gifts to the countries where there was great want, helping them partly from his own property, partly from collections he had made. He thus saved innumerable lives. Even the Turks raised a monument to him on account of his charitable activities. Pius XI followed in the footsteps of this Pope of Peace and the complete reconciliation of nations is the chief aim of his pontificate (*"Pax Christi in regno Christi."*)

"Let us pray for our chief shepherd, Pius! May the Lord keep him, give him life and health in this world, and not deliver him into the hands of his enemies!"

[1] After the Pope, the Cardinals are the highest dignitaries of the Church. They are the Pope's advisers and, upon the latter's death, choose the new Pope. The number of cardinals is fixed at 70. Most of them are bishops, but some are simply priests.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Catholic Church Alone the True Church of Jesus Christ

1. Jesus Christ founded only *one* Church. He always spoke of *one* Church, for example: "On this rock I will build my Church." He expressly said: "There will be *one* shepherd and *one* flock (John X, 16) and at the Last Supper He prayed to His Father "that they all [all who would believe in Him] may be one" (John XVII, 20-21).

In the course of centuries, however, parts of the one Church of Jesus Christ have separated from it and formed independent churches or sects.

Rise of Schismatic Churches—Sects—the False Reformation and the True

In the eleventh century the so-called Greek Church came into existence in the Greek Empire, of which the capital was Constantinople. The Patriarchs [1] of Constantinople in their pride did not want to be subject to the Pope and in this desire were supported by the emperors. Thus the great Greek Empire was torn away from the Catholic Church.

In the sixteenth century Luther, a Catholic monk and a priest, took advantage of various abuses prevalent at that time, to set himself up as a "reformer" and drew a large number of Catholics away from the Church. But in no true sense did he bring about a reform. Rather he falsified the teaching of Jesus Christ in many important points. Thus he taught that human nature was entirely

[1] The title "Patriarch" is given to the bishops of several important cities, *e. g.*, Jerusalem.

ruined by original sin, so that men have to sin by necessity; that there is no need for us to do good in order to gain Heaven, but that we need only to believe that we are redeemed by Jesus Christ; that the Church has nothing to teach, but we should, each one for himself, take the divine revelations from Holy Scripture, which even a child can interpret correctly; that there need be no Pope, bishops or priests, but in every country the reigning prince should govern the Church. Many German princes sided with Luther and introduced the new doctrine into their countries, for the most part by force. The consequence of Luther's teaching was an indescribable confusion, which continues up to the present day, a great moral depravity, serious schisms, and bloody wars.

The true reform of the Church was brought about by the Pope and the bishops, especially at the General Council of Trent (1545-1563). There was nothing to reform in doctrine, for the Catholic Church had always remained faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ. But that teaching was more clearly defined against the errors of Luther and other heretics. Furthermore, abuses which had crept into the Catholic Church were eradicated. The Council of Trent provided for the training of worthy and faithful bishops and priests and as a result of its activities and decrees new life was infused into the Church and with it arose a great many saints; numerous new religious orders were founded, and the Gospel was widely preached in pagan countries.

Other men followed Luther's example and founded new sects. In Switzerland Calvin established the so-called "Reformed Church." England was alienated from the Catholic Church by Henry VIII because the Pope refused to declare the King's lawful marriage invalid. The new form of religion that thus arose in England became known as the "Anglican Church." The Lutheran as well as the "Reformed" and the "Anglican" sects were called "Protestant churches" because they protested against the Catholic Church. Later, portions of the Lutheran and Reformed sects, especially in Germany, united and called themselves "Evangelical." Like Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII, other self-constituted reformers, especially in England and America, founded new sects, until at the present time there are over 200 separate and distinct Protestant denominations.

In 1872 some clerical professors in Germany who did not want to acknowledge the infallibility of the Pope, founded the so-called "Old Catholic Church." In 1920 a number of priests in the Czecho-

Slovakian Republic, who disliked the law of sacerdotal celibacy, established a "Cechoslovakian Church."

2. God has provided ways and means by which everyone can recognize the true Church of Jesus Christ in spite of these many divisions. He has endowed the Catholic Church with certain marks which prove that she alone is the true Church. The most important of these marks are the following:

(a) The Catholic Church *has existed since the time of Jesus Christ.* All others forms of the Christian religion came into being many centuries after His death. Therefore, they cannot be the true Church of Christ, but are the churches of Luther, Calvin, and others.

(b) The Catholic Church is *Apostolic,* that is, she is intimately connected with the Apostles, to whom Jesus said: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you" (John XX, 21). The rulers of the Catholic Church, the Pope and the bishops, received their power from the Apostles, whose lawful successors they are. In particular, the Catholic Church has a lawful successor of the Apostle Peter, that is, the Pope of Rome. In her are fulfilled the words of Christ: "Thou art Peter (that is, the rock), and upon this rock I will build my Church." The Catholic Church has always been founded on Peter, whose successor, the Pope, governs and directs her. In most other churches the Apostolic office no longer exists; they have no bishops and no vicar of Christ, and not one of them can say that it is "built upon Peter."

(c) The Catholic Church is *one* in its doctrine, in its Sacraments, and in its head. Throughout the whole world the same doctrine is preached in every Catholic church, the same Sacraments are administered, and all the faithful acknowledge the same Pope as their spiritual head. Thus in the Catholic Church the words of Jesus Christ are fulfilled in a remarkable way: "All [that believe in me] shall be one." The Catholic Church is truly "one flock" with "one shepherd." Such unity is found

in no other religious denomination. Each of the 200 or more Protestant sects has its internal differences. In the "Evangelical" sect, for example, one minister preaches the existence of God, the Trinity, and the Divinity of Jesus Christ, whereas another denies these truths; one maintains that penance is a Sacrament, another that it is not; on the whole, they do not agree on any point except that they oppose the Catholic Church. The Protestant sects, moreover, have a different head in each country, the ruling prince or a church council consisting of several men. The Greek Church also is divided into many autonomous groups,—Russian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Roumanian, and so on. The "one fold" with the "one shepherd" exists nowhere except in the Catholic Church.

(d) In the Catholic Church the injunction of Christ is fulfilled: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations," for the Catholic Church indeed preaches the Gospel throughout the world and therefore rightly bears the name "Catholic," *i. e., Universal* Church. No other church can say that it teaches all nations.[1] All other religions are more or less national or regional, but the Catholic religion is the religion of the whole world. The 200 Protestant sects together do not contain nearly as many members as the Catholic Church alone.

(e) The Catholic Church leads her followers to a holy life pleasing to God. In all ages many faithful Catholics have practised the virtues inculcated by Jesus Christ heroically and to a high degree of perfection. God Himself has frequently confirmed the holiness of such Catholic Christians by *miracles.* Almost every year canonizations and beatifications take place in the Catholic Church; but no one is declared blessed or canonized unless the strictest examination has fully proved that he was exalted by God through miracles. Other churches have

[1] It is true, there are Protestant missions nearly everywhere, but these missions do not go forth from the same fold, but from different churches.

no members who have practised the Christian virtues in so high degree as have many members of the Catholic Church; nor can they point to miracles.

From all these marks it can be clearly seen that *the Catholic Church alone is the true Church of Christ, the Church which He founded and with which He still remains.*

Thank God, whose grace has called thee to the true Church, and never separate from it.

How many churches did Jesus Christ found?

Jesus Christ founded only one Church.

How do we know that the Catholic Church is the one true Church of Christ?

We know the Catholic Church is the one true Church of Christ by certain marks it alone possesses.

What are the chief marks or notes of the Catholic Church?

The chief marks or notes of the Catholic Church are: its existence since the time of Jesus Christ; its being built on Peter; its unity of teaching and headship; its universality; its saints and miracles.

CONVERTS

A great many non-Catholics, especially pious and highly educated Protestants, have become convinced that the Catholic Church alone is the true Church of Christ, have returned to the Church from which their ancestors apostatized, and have found perfect contentment and happiness in its pale. Many have written books giving their reasons for returning, and describing their happiness. The following is a short list of eminent converts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

Clergymen and Theologians

John Henry Newman, of Oxford, became a convert in 1845 and died as a Cardinal in 1890. Upon his return to the true Church English newspapers said that in him the Church of England had lost one of the greatest men she had ever produced.

Henry Edward Manning, also an Anglican clergyman, came over in 1851 and died as a Cardinal in 1892. After his conversion a high Anglican priest said in a public address that the whole Anglican Church hid her face in mourning at the loss of one of her most brilliant sons.

Georg Evers, a Hanoverian pastor, returned to the Catholic Church in 1881; he wrote a work called "Catholic or Protestant?"

Dr. Krogh-Tonning, the leading Protestant theologian of Norway, became a convert in 1900, died in 1911. He wrote "Memoirs of a Convert."

Robert Hugh Benson, an Anglican clergyman, son of the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, came over in 1903; died in 1914. He wrote "Confessions of a Convert."

Dr. J. R. Albani, a Saxon minister, who returned to the Catholic Church in 1921 on account of the ever increasing doctrinal divisions in the Protestant sects. He explained the reasons for his conversion in a book entitled "Rechenschaft" (1926).

Conversion is particularly difficult for clergymen, for they lose their living and often have to struggle for an existence. Yet a great many have come over to the Catholic Church.

Jurists

Ernest Jarcke (1825, +1852).

Georg Phillips (1828, +1872). This eminent savant at the time of his conversion was professor at Berlin, where no lecture hall was enough to hold his audiences and, he had therefore to lecture in the Aula (banquet hall); as a consequence of his conversion he had to leave Berlin.

Ludwig von Hammerstein (1885, +1905); he became a Jesuit and wrote many powerful apologetic books.

Historians

Friedrich von Hurter (1844, +1865); wrote "Birth and Rebirth."

A. F. Gfrörer (1853, +1861); a famous historian.

Onno Klopp (1873, +1903); also a historical scholar of great ability and renown.

Albert von Ruville, a professor in the Protestant University of Halle, Prussia; became a convert in 1909; is still living; wrote "Back to Holy Church."

Poets and Authors

Friedrich Leopold, Count zu Stolberg (1750, +1819) son of a Danish magistrate, friend of Goethe, Klopstock, Lavater, etc.; a learned and prolific author.

Friedrich von Schlegel (1808, +1829), famous poet and literary historian, the "Messiah" of the Romantic School.

Louise Hensel (1818, +1876), a parson's daughter, author of "Home!" and other sweet and touching poems.

Cordula Wöhler, pen-name "Cordula Peregrina" (1870, +1916).

W. Scharlau (1913), still living; a parson's wife; author of "Struggles."

Freiin Anna von Krane (1884), still living; wrote, "My Life."

Johannes Sorge (killed in the World War).

Johannes Jörgensen (1896), still living; a famous Danish poet, wrote "Life's Truths and Untruths," etc.

Gilbert K. Chesterton, famous English essayist (1922).

Orestes A. Brownson (1844, +1876), American reviewer and philosopher.

Other Converts

Dr. George Bull, physician in Paris (1892, +1911), author of "Why I Became a Catholic."

Frederick van Eeden (1922), Dutch physician and well-known writer.

Friedrich Overbeck (1810, +1869), famous painter.

Willibrord Verkade (1892), now a Benedictine monk in Beuron; author of "From Unrest to God."

Queen Mary of Bavaria, a Prussian Princess, converted 1874, ten years after the death of her husband, King Maximilian II; died 1889.

Landgravine Anna von Hessen, niece of Emperor William I, converted 1901, died 1918.

Marquess of Ripon (1874), Grand Master of all the English Freemasons; later Viceroy of India; died in 1909. A year before his death Mr. Asquith, who later became Prime Minister, paid him the following public tribute in Parliament: "Among all living subjects of Great Britain there is none that has rendered such great services to his country as Lord Ripon."

In the year 1913 a whole monastery of 22 Anglican monks on

the Isle of Caldey, southwest coast of Wales, came over to the Catholic Church; also a convent of 24 Anglican nuns in Milford Haven, Wales. In England alone every year about 10,000 Protestants are converted.

It is true that many Catholics fall away from the true faith and that some of them join other churches; but they are lukewarm or unbelieving Catholics, and their defection is hardly ever dictated by spiritual motives, and very few if any of them feel happy after their apostasy.

One Who Stopped Halfway

After the death of Calvin the spiritual head of the so-called "Reformed Church" was Theodore Beza of Geneva. The Pope sent St. Francis de Sales, who was Bishop of that city, to try to convert Beza. Beza consented to answer any questions put to him. Francis began: "Can one save his soul in the Roman Church?" Beza was deeply embarrassed by this question. If he answered "No," it would mean that there was no true Church before Luther and Calvin and this could not be. If he answered in the affirmative, it would mean that he acknowledged the Roman Church as the true Church, since the Protestants at that time unanimously taught that outside the true Church there was no salvation. After more than a quarter of an hour's reflection, Beza answered: "Yes, one can save his soul in the Roman Church." Francis asked: "Then why did the Calvinists shed so much blood in order to bring their faith into France?" Beza in a hesitating voice replied: "Because there were abuses in the Roman Church that required reform. For example, how can their doctrine of the necessity of good works be tolerated? Ordinary people as a rule do not perform good works; are we therefore to assume that they act against their conscience and are eternally damned?" St. Francis quoted the teaching of Jesus regarding good fruits and His sentence at the Last Judgment. Beza, forced into a corner, began to abuse the "Papists" (Catholics). St. Francis said: "Your violence shows that you cannot produce any solid arguments against my proof. But I have not come to harm you; I promise that I shall not discuss any more controversial questions with you." Beza apologized and invited the Bishop to visit him again. St. Francis had two more long discussions with Beza and prayed a great deal for him. One night Beza had a dream,

in which he saw himself standing before the judgment-seat of God; sentence was about to be pronounced, when the Blessed Virgin, whom he had venerated in his youth, obtained for him a brief respite, that he might do penance. This dream wrought a great change in Beza; he retracted several errors which he had taught, declared himself opposed to Protestantism and for the Catholic Church, and approved devotion to the Mother of God. He advised a certain preacher to return to the Catholic Church, assuring him that he himself would also do so if he succeeded in escaping from Geneva. He actually attempted to flee from the city in disguise, but failed, and from that time on was closely watched. He remained a Protestant, outwardly at least, and at his death (which occurred in 1605, when he was 86), he accused his countrymen of being responsible for his damnation. (Lager, "Life of St. Francis de Sales," 2nd ed., pp. 141–173.)

CHAPTER XXV

Infallibility of the Church and the Pope

1. Jesus desires that his doctrine shall be preached pure and unaltered throughout the ages. Therefore He assists the Church in the teaching of His doctrine. When He instructed the Apostles and their successors to go forth and teach, He added the promise: **"I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matth. XXVIII, 20).** He also promised to the Apostles and their successors the assistance of the Holy Ghost when He said: **"I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth" (John XIV, 16–17).** Through the assistance of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost, the Church is immune from error and infallible in her teaching, so that, in the 1900 years of her existence, she has not had to retract a single one of her doctrines.

2. Infallibility does not belong to the individual bishops, but to the whole teaching Church, that is, to the bishops together with the Pope. Whenever there have been contentions over certain articles of faith or certain rules of conduct, the bishops from all parts of the world have assembled and, presided over by the Pope or his representative, have passed judgment on these contested points. Such a meeting is known as an ecumenical or a general council. The last such councils were held at Trent (1545–1563) and at the Vatican in Rome (1869–1870). What is taught by a general council is the teaching of the whole Church and therefore cannot be erroneous.

3. The Pope alone can also render decisions in matters of

faith and morals, and when he does so and enjoins all the faithful to accept them, he is preserved from error by Jesus Christ, who declared Peter and his successors to be the rock on which He built His Church (Matth. XVI, 18). If the Pope were to go astray in his decisions and lead the whole Church into error, the Church of Christ would no longer be built upon a rock. Again, Jesus said to Peter: "Feed my lambs . . . Feed my sheep" (John XXI, 15–17), thereby making Peter and his successor, the Pope, chief shepherd and teacher, and enjoining all the faithful, including the bishops, to obey him.

Therefore Jesus Christ cannot allow the Pope to err in his decisions and to lead the whole Church into error. This is also expressed in the words addressed to Peter by Jesus: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (Luke XXII, 32).

The faithful always accepted the decisions of the Pope in contentious matters; but the Council of the Vatican (1870) expressly defined the infallibility of the Pope as an article of faith.

4. It is of the greatest importance for us that the Church is infallible. Thereby she is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. III, 15), on which we can depend absolutely. Outside the Church all is uncertain. Heretics and unbelievers do not know what to believe in the most important questions. Now they say there is no God and no soul, but only matter; at another time they maintain that the whole world is God or that all matter is animated by a soul. What they uphold today as an heroic deed, they denounce as a crime tomorrow, and *vice versa.* St. Paul admonishes us to "be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men" (Eph. IV, 14).

Why is the Church infallible in her teaching?

The Church is infallible in her teaching because she is supported by Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost.

When is the Pope infallible?

The Pope is infallible when he makes decisions respecting faith and morals and enjoins the whole Church to accept them.

The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception

In the Catholic Church the conviction reigned from the beginning that the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Our Lord, could never have been stained by sin, not even by original sin. For this is indicated by Holy Scripture (Gen. III, 15; Luke I, 28) and has been handed down by the Apostles. Nevertheless this doctrine was doubted by some. Now, in order that there might be complete certainty on this point and that the veneration of the Blessed Virgin might increase in the Church, Pope Pius IX, on December 8th, 1854, in the presence of a great number of bishops from all countries, declared by virtue of his power as the supreme teacher: "The doctrine that the most Blessed Virgin Mary was, by a special grace of God, from the first moment of her existence, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was revealed by God and therefore is to be firmly and constantly believed by all Christians." This decision was recognized as infallible by all Catholics and received by them with the greatest joy. The love and veneration of the Immaculate Mother of God increased enormously.

Soon after the decision of the Pope was confirmed by a miracle. In 1858, the Blessed Virgin appeared repeatedly to a poor girl called Bernadette, fourteen years old, in a little grotto at the village of Lourdes in Southern France. At the seventeenth apparition, on March 25th, she answered the girl's repeated question who she was by saying: "I am the Immaculate Conception." Poor little ignorant Bernadette did not know what the "Immaculate Conception" was, for she had never heard the expression. Therefore the words were really a revelation from Heaven. That the Mother of God actually appeared to the girl is proved by the miracles which have taken place since at Lourdes.

CHAPTER XXVI

Our Duty towards the Church

Because Jesus Christ gave us such a reliable guide to Heaven in His Church, we should not be indifferent to the Church, but should have confidence in her, believe and obey her.

1. Above all, we must have confidence in and belong to the Church of Christ. For it is the will of Christ that all His followers should be united in one common fold. We see this from His prayer at the Last Supper: "All [who believe in me] shall be one," and in the words: "There shall be one shepherd and one flock." This community, to which all men shall belong, is clearly the Church which Jesus founded, that is, the Catholic Church. Jesus requires that all should belong to this Church, because she alone has received from Him all the means by which she can guide us with certainty on the way to eternal happiness.

2. Therefore, whoever does not yet belong to the Catholic Church, is obliged, as soon as he learns this Church is the true Church of Jesus Christ, to enter her pale. If anyone has not yet come to this conviction, but suspects that the Catholic Church may be the true Church of Christ, he should persevere in asking God for light and grace and try to obtain more information about the Catholic Church. God will not punish those who are completely ignorant on this point. If they are baptized and believe in Jesus Christ, they belong to the Catholic Church in spirit; and even if they are not baptized, but have a good will, God will not permit them to be lost.

3. Those who already belong to the Catholic Church may not

leave her under any pretext. Whoever is unfaithful to the Church, is disloyal to Jesus Christ and will lose eternal salvation. For Jesus said to the teaching Church: **"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me"** (Luke X, 16). Therefore St. Cyprian, bishop and martyr, writes: "Whosoever will not have the Church for his mother, cannot have God for his father." Should any person try to lead you away from the Church for the sake of temporal advantage, repulse him and remember the exhortation of Jesus: *"What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?"* (Matth. XVI, 26.)

4. It is not enough that we belong to the Catholic Church to be saved. We must allow ourselves to be guided by the Church, because she has been given us by Jesus to be our guide to Heaven. We must believe, that is, accept as true whatever the Church teaches, and we must obey her commands. Jesus demands this as we know from His words to the Apostles and their successors: "He that heareth you, heareth me." Of him that will not hear the Church Jesus says: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican" (Matth. XVIII, 17).

5. The Church is a faithful guide and a true mother, who cares lovingly for us and prays for us from earliest childhood to death, and even after death. Let us be duly grateful to her! Jesus loves the Church more than anything else on earth (Eph. V, 25–27). Let us also love her fervently, pray for her, and never make common cause with her enemies. Let us also do our share toward supporting her, especially in her needs for divine worship and the support of her bishops and priests, at home and in the missions. The Church is always being persecuted; but let us not lose courage, for Jesus Christ has promised that He will be with her to the end of the world and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.

What is our duty towards the Church?

Our duty is to belong to the Church, to believe what she teaches, and to obey her commands.

Faithful unto Death

In the 16th century, the age of the great western schism, among many others Sir Thomas More gave magnificent example of fidelity to the Church. He was one of the most learned men of his day and a magistrate by calling. His strict sense of justice and his affable disposition made him very popular among his people, and, besides, he enjoyed great esteem throughout Europe on account of his profound learning. King Henry VIII made him his chancellor, that is, prime minister.

After some time the King conceived an adulterous affection for a lady of the court and wanted to make her his wife, though he was already validly married. He asked the Pope to declare his marriage null and void. The Pope could not do this, for the marriage had been lawfully and validly contracted. As a result, the King fell away from the Catholic Church and proclaimed himself head of the English Church. As such he annulled his marriage and took unto himself the object of his adulterous passion. He insisted that his subjects should acknowledge him as the lawful head of the Church in England. The King set special value on Thomas More's acknowledgment because of the great esteem in which he was held by all. More refused; for had he taken the oath demanded of him, he would have apostatized from the Catholic Church and become a member of the Church of Henry VIII, the so-called Anglican Church. He well knew the King would not yield; and therefore resigned his position as Chancellor and prepared himself for death.

Soon after the King had him cast into prison. More was not afraid. While in prison he wrote a Latin pamphlet entitled, "We Should Not Fear to Die for the Faith." His wife was less brave. When she visited him in prison, she advised him to do the King's will and not to throw away his life's happiness. More asked her: "How long do you believe I have yet to live?" "Some twenty years at least," she replied. "Had you said a thousand years, it would have been something; and yet the merchant who would risk losing all eternity for the sake of a thousand years, would be a poor

business man." Sir Thomas lingered in prison for a year and a half. During this time the King had three monks executed because they would not acknowledge him as head of the Church, and he saw to it that Sir Thomas could see the executions from his window. Yet the latter remained firm.

On July 6th, 1535, a friend advised More that he was to be executed on that day. He thanked his friend warmly for the good news, went to the place of execution with a firm tread, blindfolded himself, recited the Psalm "Miserere," *i. e.*, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy," laid his head on the block, and was executed.

How tenderly the Saviour must have received this faithful soul! What happiness More must have been enjoying in Heaven for these 400 years! And he still has before him a whole eternity of beatitude! In comparison what are the few years of persecution he suffered at the hands of the King! In 1886, Pope Leo XIII beatified Sir Thomas More and thus proclaimed him an example for the whole Church. Let us endeavour to imitate his example!

CHAPTER XXVII

The Communion of Saints—Why We Honour the Saints in Heaven

[I believe in the] **Communion of Saints.** (From the ninth article of the Apostles' Creed.)

1. All who belong to the Catholic Church are at the same time members of that body of which Christ is the Head. St. Paul writes: "As in one body we have many members . . . so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another" (Rom. XII, 4–5). All the members of this body are entitled to the priceless spiritual benefits of the Church. All share in the infinite merits of Jesus Christ and in His Sacraments; every Mass is offered up for all and, during every Mass, prayers are said for all. Each member shall pray for all the others, and all enjoy the fruits of the good works of each. That many Catholic Christians lead a holy life and sacrifice themselves entirely for God is for the good of all, and for their sake God looks down with merciful eyes on us all. Thus all Catholics stand in spiritual communion with one another.

2. We are also in spiritual communion with the Saints in Heaven, that is, with those departed souls who have reached eternal salvation. They are our brothers and sisters. St. Paul tells us: "You are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God" (Eph. II, 19). The saints in Heaven love us and intercede for us. All the great things they have done for God's sake benefit us also. Hence we should honour them and ask them to intercede for us. We should also imitate their vir-

tues. It is a commendable practice to acquaint ourselves more closely with the lives of the saints, especially our patron saints, and the patron saints of our churches and country.

3. Our worship of God is not lessened by our venerating the saints and calling upon them for help. For we do *not adore the saints*. Nor do we honour them for their own sake, but only because they are close to God, and we do not ask that they help us themselves, but that they ask God to help us. Neither do we adore the Blessed Virgin Mary; we merely honour her as the Mother of God and implore her powerful intercession.

4. We are also in communion with those who are being purged of their faults in Purgatory. We can aid them by our prayers and good works, especially by offering up the holy Sacrifice of the Mass for their release; in return they will intercede for us with God while they are still in Purgatory, and yet more when they finally reach Heaven.

5. Thus loving help and intercession go back and forth continually between Heaven, earth, and Purgatory. This spiritual union that binds Catholic Christians to one another, to the Saints in Heaven, and to the suffering souls in Purgatory, is called "Communion of Saints." It connects the "Militant Church" on earth with the "Suffering Church" in Purgatory and the "Triumphant Church" in Heaven. It is called Communion of *Saints* because all who belong to it are sanctified and consecrated to God by baptism. Let us rejoice that we are never alone! Let us foster a true friendship with the Saints in Heaven and the Poor Souls in Purgatory, until the time comes when we shall be united to them at the throne of God!

With whom have we spiritual communion in the Catholic Church?

In the Catholic Church we have spiritual communion with all Catholic Christians on earth, with the Saints in Heaven, and with the Poor Souls in Purgatory.

The Conversion of Ignatius Loyola

St. Ignatius (died 1556) was a Spaniard. In his youth he was an officer much given to pleasure, who troubled himself little about God or eternity. During a war waged by the Spaniards against the French, the latter laid siege to the fortress of Pampelona, of which Ignatius was commander. He was seriously wounded and had to surrender with his men. All were made prisoners, but the French released Ignatius on account of his gallantry and carried him to his paternal castle, Loyola, to be there taken care of. During his convalescence, Ignatius, feeling bored, asked for some novels to read. As there were none in the castle, he began to read books about the life of Christ and the saints. The longer he read, the clearer it became to him that the saints had lived much more according to reason than he. They also had suffered and fought, but not for temporal glory, as he did, but for the honour of God and their own eternal salvation. He resolved thenceforth to occupy himself more with the eternal verities and to begin an entirely new life. He remained faithful to his resolution, became a great saint, and founded a famous order,—the Society of Jesus.

Many, like St. Ignatius, have become virtuous and holy by reading the life of Christ and the lives of His saints and by imitating Him and them.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Death and Judgment

[I believe in the] **forgiveness of sins.** (Tenth article of the Creed.)

The Catholic Church has received from Jesus Christ the power to forgive sins. She exercises this power through the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

The most important thing for each person is his ultimate fate.

The last four things of man are: death, judgment, Heaven, and hell.

1. God wished that our bodies as well as our souls should be immortal, but through sin death came into the world. At death the soul separates from the body. Holy Scripture says: "The dust returns into its earth, from whence it was, and the spirit returns to God, who gave it" (Eccles. XII, 7). Judgment follows directly upon death (Hebr. IX, 27). "We must all be manifested before the judgment of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil" (2 Cor. V, 10). No one can escape from the Divine Judge, for He is omnipotent; nor can any one deceive Him, for He is omniscient. Jesus will show us all the good or evil we have done, spoken or thought. He will demand an exact accounting of how we have spent every moment of our life. After death we cannot receive pardon for mortal sins. Jesus will decide irrevocably and with the strictest justice whether our souls will ascend directly to Heaven or whether we must still make atonement in Purgatory, or whether

we shall be cast into hell. The sentence will depend most of all on whether we bring with us to this judgment sanctifying grace, or whether we appear in the state of mortal sin. As this judgment will be passed on each person individually, it is called the Particular Judgment. The General Judgment will follow on the Last Day.

2. It is uncertain when we shall die; perhaps it will be unexpectedly. Therefore we should always be ready: we should do penance for past sins, preserve sanctifying grace, and be zealous in the performance of good works. To urge us on to these things, we should think of death often, especially when we are tempted to commit mortal sin. At such times we should do well to say to ourselves: "I must die, though when, where, and how I know not. But I do know that if I die in mortal sin, I shall be lost for ever." It will be well to repeat this truth every evening before going to sleep. If we keep ourselves well prepared, we need have no fear of death, for it will be our entrance into eternal bliss.

3. Holy Scripture says of the death of the just: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. CXV, 16). Jesus says: "Let you yourselves be like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen I say to you, that he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and passing will minister unto them" (Luke XII, 36–37). St. Paul writes: "For we know, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven" (2 Cor. V, 1). Of the death of the sinner the Royal Prophet says: "The death of the wicked is terrible" (Ps. XXXIII, 22). "What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. . . . Such things as

these the sinners said in hell. For the hope of the wicked is as dust, which is blown away with the wind, and as a thin froth, which is dispersed by the storm; and a smoke that is scattered abroad by the wind; and as the remembrance of a guest of one day that passeth by" (Wisd. V, 8–15). Which part will *you* choose?

What happens when we die?

When we die, the soul is separated from the body.

What happens to the soul after death?

After death, the soul is judged by Jesus Christ, and goes to Heaven, or to Purgatory, or to hell.

The Wise and the Foolish Virgins

That we must be always ready for death, Jesus shows us by the parable of the ten virgins: "The kingdom of heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The five foolish, having taken their lamps, took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered, saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they who were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us! But he answering, said: Amen I say to you, I know you not!"

After Jesus had related this parable, He added: "Watch ye therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour!" (Matth. XXV, 1–13).

The bridegroom is Jesus Christ; the bride is His Church; the wedding feast is eternal happiness. Jesus comes at the moment when we die. Those who have the faith, but do not practise it (good works are the oil), and thus lose sanctifying grace, resemble the

foolish virgins. Sanctifying grace is the light that must burn in our souls. Many negligent Christians count on obtaining sanctifying grace at the last moment. But then it is generally too late. They run the grave risk of being excluded from Heaven.

Perhaps Jesus will call you today! Are you ready? Live in such a way as you would wish to have lived at the hour of your death.

The Happy Death of a Catholic

Once three missionary Sisters from Algiers set out for some neighbouring villages in order to administer corporal and spiritual consolation to the poor natives. After a two hours' walk they came to the first village. The men and women were in the fields and only children, old men, and invalids could be seen. The Sisters were startled by a cry and suppressed moaning coming from one of the yards. They proceeded cautiously. Perhaps it was some family brawl which was none of their concern. But no,—it was a pale, emaciated girl lying on the ground weeping and writhing. "What is the matter, child?" the Sisters asked sympathetically. But to their repeated questions the girl at first made no answer. Her long thin arms resting on her knees, her face buried in her hands, she merely wept. After some time, however, she replied: "I am very ill; I must die and I do not want to die! I am afraid to be buried all alone!" Her sobbing increased. One of the Sisters said consolingly: "Listen, my poor child. If you wish it, you will not die. There is a soul, a spirit within you that cannot die. If you are willing, your soul will go to the dear Lord in Heaven and only your body, which will no longer feel anything, will be laid in the ground." The girl listened attentively and presently folded her hands and said beseechingly: "Oh, please let me go to your Heaven!" she was briefly instructed in all that was necessary, and the Sacrament of Baptism made her an heir to the Kingdom of Heaven. After Baptism she was transformed and said with a happy smile: "Now I fear death no longer. I am willing to die, so that I may see God." Before long the good God heard her prayer.

Death of the Emperor Charles of Austria

Though his enemies in the World War circulated the most outrageous calumnies about him in order to turn his people against him, Emperor Charles of Austria was a model Catholic, father,

and regent. His pious life was sealed by an equally pious death.

In November, 1921, Charles was taken a prisoner to the Island of Madeira. As he had been robbed of almost all his property, his means were exhausted after a short stay in Madeira, and he was forced to take a villa in an extremely unhealthy location which the owner offered him gratis. Here the Emperor fell a victim to pneumonia, which caused him severe suffering. He bore all without complaining and offered it up to God. As soon as the illness was known to be pneumonia, the Emperor confessed his sins and received Holy Communion and Extreme Unction. That was on Monday, March 27th. During the following days he was mostly delirious. When he awoke from his feverish sleep, he uttered expressions such as: "How comforting it is to have confidence in the Sacred Heart of Jesus: otherwise this pain would be unbearable." He said this so simply and earnestly that his nurse was moved to tears. On the last night before his death he said: "I always try to recognize as clearly as possible God's will in all things, and to do exactly what He wishes me to do." He prayed a great deal, and when he was told to be quiet, answered: "I have so many to pray for." Then he would look at the large crucifix that hung opposite him on the wall. From Monday on his wife, the Empress Zita, never left the sickroom, but nursed him herself, only permitting the trained nurse to help her or relieve her for short periods of rest. The sick man's greatest comfort was daily Communion. On Saturday, April 1st, he became much worse. The chaplain brought in the Blessed Sacrament for exposition near the Emperor's bed, after he had received Holy Communion. Soon after Charles sank back on the pillows and whispered: "I love my children so dearly . . ." and, turning to the Empress, said: "I should like to go home with you." He understood all that was said to him, but could not always make himself understood, and much that he wanted to say had to be guessed. When he was understood, he was happy, when not, he smiled sadly and shook his head. At one time he had to be lifted high on the pillows, at another, placed low on the couch. Finally he said to the Empress: "You must hold me." She sat on the edge of the bed and held him in her arms until he died. He talked to her in a voice that could be heard by those around: "I suffer so much; I must suffer in order that my people may be reunited!" For his children he prayed: "Lord, preserve them, body and soul; let them die rather than ever offend Thee by a mortal sin." Often he prayed: "My Jesus,

I live for Thee. . . . Lord, Thy will be done. . . . Come, O Jesus!" Yet it was only towards 11 o'clock that he seemed to realize that death was near. His head resting on the Empress's shoulder, his eyes fixed on the Blessed Sacrament exposed near his bed, he suddenly made a movement towards the Blessed Sacrament and, with hands folded, prayed with intense ardour: "Dear Saviour, I pray Thee, I pray, I pray . . ." For what he prayed no one knew. After a fervent act of contrition, he exclaimed: "My God, I recommend to Thee my wife and children." Then, struggling for breath, he mentioned each one by name and added with great difficulty: "And the little one" (who was not yet born). He offered up his life for his people. Asked whether he would like to receive Holy Communion again, as Viaticum, he answered: "Oh, yes, I wish it very much!" And he received the Holy Viaticum with great devotion. Hearing him whisper, "Otto," the Crown Prince came and knelt by the bedside. The Emperor Charles repeated ejaculations suggested by the Empress until death was near. He suffered intensely. His last prayer, pronounced in a clear voice, was: "Lord, Thy will be done! Amen." His head sank back on the Empress's shoulder, and, with the word "Jesus" on his lips, he breathed his last. No doubt the Master's promise was fulfilled in him: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven" (Matth. V, 10, 12).

The Death of One Who Persecuted the Church

In the South American Republic of Ecuador, the great President, Garcia Moreno, who was assassinated in 1875 on account of his strong support of the Catholic religion, was succeeded by a Liberal, Borrero. The latter was succeeded by the radical General Ventemilla (1876–1883), who began by persecuting the Church, squandering money, filling important posts with ignorant upstarts, and dismissing the officials appointed by Garcia Moreno. Of the death of Ventemilla the *Katholische Missionen* (Freiburg, Herder, December, 1908) gave the following account:

The consoling news comes from Ecuador that Ignatius de Ventemilla, 80 years old, revolutionary general and president, once an enemy of the Church, was converted on his death-bed and be-

came reconciled to God and the Church. He made his confession to the prior of the Augustinians and desired that the Holy Viaticum should be brought to him with the greatest possible ceremony and military honour. His wish was complied with. Before receiving Holy Communion, the dying man solemnly declared before witnesses: "I beg forgiveness for the scandal I have given during my life. I have been looked upon as an infidel and spoken of as such, but I now affirm that I was not an infidel. Not from hatred, but from sinful weakness, I acted contrary to the advice of my counsellors. I wish to die reconciled to the Church and to my God. Once more I beg forgiveness and exhort those present to make known to others what I have here stated. Further, let it be known to all that I have never been a Freemason or belonged to any sect." Then, turning to old General Montcayo, who led the military escort of the priest, Ventemilla said: "General, things look different when one faces death. Let my example serve as a warning and a lesson to you." He then received the Body of the Lord with great fervour. His conversion caused a great sensation.

CHAPTER XXIX

Heaven

[I believe in] **life everlasting. Amen.** (Twelfth article of the Creed.)

The word "Amen" at the end of the Creed comes from the Hebrew and means "So be it!"

When we die in the grace of God, Heaven is ours.

1. Heaven is a place so beautiful that no imagination can picture it. But far more beautiful is that which we shall behold in Heaven,—the innumerable hosts of angels and saints that, in the words of Jesus, "shine like the sun" (Matth. XIII, 43). We shall find all good, noble people there as saints, and we shall be loved by them as brothers and sisters. We shall behold the Mother of God, who far surpasses all the angels and saints in beauty, and shall be greeted by her as her dear children. We shall also behold the Saviour. When He appeared transfigured before the three Apostles on the mountain, they were so transported that they wanted to remain there always. But we shall behold Him in far greater splendour in Heaven. And He will say to us: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of the Lord" (Matth. XXV, 21). "Come, my bride! Now shalt thou be crowned" (Cant. IV, 8). Finally, we shall behold the Holy Trinity. Nothing can be compared to its radiance and splendour. God is a vast ocean of beauty and glory. This eternal and glorious God, in His love for us, will give Himself entirely to us. As we are told in Holy Scripture (Ps. XXV, 9), He will, as it were, make us "inebriated

with the plenty of his house" and allow us to "drink of the torrent of his pleasure" for ever and ever.

The splendour of Heaven was shown to St. John, the Apostle, and "a great voice coming from the throne of God" said to him: "Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them; and they shall be his people; and God himself with them shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away" (Apoc. XXI, 3–4). All our desires shall there be gratified and our joy, as Jesus tells us (John XVI, 23), no man shall take from us. The beatitude of Heaven will last for ever. St. John writes in the Apocalypse (XIX, 6, 9): "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying: Alleluia: for the Lord our God the Omnipotent hath reigned. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife [the Church] hath prepared herself. . . . Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

2. We are all destined for this unending happiness. But we must merit it by serving God faithfully here below. Jesus says: "He that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matth. VII, 21). The service which God demands of us, lasts but a short time, whereas the glorious reward lasts for ever. If the service of God, the fight against evil, the sufferings sent us by God seem to us too hard to bear, let us look to the reward beckoning to us.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. II, 9).

Who will enter into Heaven?

They who die in the grace of God will enter into Heaven.

The Longing for Heaven

St. Augustine, a great sinner in his youth, was converted by hearing the sermons of St. Ambrose in Milan. His mother, St. Monica, was overjoyed at this, for she had prayed and wept unceasingly for the conversion of her son. After his conversion she went back home with him to Africa. On the way they stayed for some time at the Italian port of Ostia. In his "Confessions" Augustine says about the days spent in Ostia (Book IX, ch. 10): "As the day approached on which she [Monica] was to bid farewell to this life,—O Lord, Thou didst know, though we knew it not, —it happened by the secret workings of Thy providence as I believe, that she and I were standing alone at a window which looked on to the garden of the house inhabited by us. Here, by the mouth of the Tiber, after a toilsome journey, we were resting apart from the crowd, with a view to continuing our journey by sea. We were discoursing together alone very sweetly and, forgetting the past in our desire to grasp the future, were asking each other in the presence of the unvarying Truth, which Thou art, what that eternal life of the saints would be which 'eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor heart of man has imagined.' But yet we grasped with the mouth of our heart after those heavenly streams of Thy fountain, the fountain of life, of which Thou art the source, in order that, drawing from it what strength we were able, we might in some way or other form a picture of this ineffable mystery. . . . As we were talking thus, the world with all its pleasures seemed to us a thing of no account. Then my mother said to me: 'As for me, my son, nothing in this life delights me. I know not what more I still can do or why I am left here. I have no further hope from this world. There was one thing that made me desirous of dwelling here on earth a little longer, which was, that I might see you a Catholic before I died. God has abundantly granted my request in letting me see you even despise earthly happiness and become His servant. What am I doing here?' "

St. Francis and the Music of Heaven

St. Francis of Assisi was tried by God in the crucible of many sorrows. He was tortured by great physical pains, and the monasteries he founded were a cause of much anxiety to him. One night as he lay tossing about on his hard bed, unable to sleep on account of

many worries, he comforted himself with the thought: "In Heaven all will be as it ought to be. There at least will be peace and joy for all eternity." Then it seemed to him as if an angel were standing near his bedside, holding a violin. The angel said: "Francis, I am going to play for you as we play before the throne of God." Laying the instrument against his cheek, he drew the bow once over the strings. St. Francis was penetrated with such joy that it was as though he no longer possessed a body and worry did not exist. "If the angel had drawn the bow across the strings of his violin once more, I should have died of too great happiness," he told his brother monks in the morning.

What happiness will be ours when we are actually in Heaven, and that for all eternity!

CHAPTER XXX

Purgatory

1. Not all who die in the grace of God are free from guilt. Most of them still have venial sins on their souls or must atone for sins committed previously. Since nothing defiled can enter into Heaven (Apoc. XXI, 27), a place of purification has been instituted for such souls. This place or state is called Purgatory. Holy Scripture says of the souls in Purgatory: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins" (2 Mach. XII, 46). St. Paul speaks of Purgatory when he says: "If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. III, 15).

Instructed by the Apostles, the Church from the beginning has believed that Purgatory exists, and has prayed for the souls detained there for purification.

2. The greatest suffering of the souls in Purgatory is their separation from God, whom they love with their whole strength, but who imposes on them further and very painful penances. Many souls must suffer a long time in Purgatory, others not so long. They themselves can do nothing to alleviate or shorten their suffering. They are indeed "poor souls." But they have the sweet consolation of knowing that they are loved by God and are certain of eternal happiness. For in the end all souls that are in Purgatory will enter Heaven. After the Last Judgment there will be no more Purgatory, only Heaven and hell.

3. God alleviates the suffering of the poor souls and shortens the time of their probation when we pray for them, when

we offer up good works and obtain indulgences for them, especially when we assist at holy Mass for them or have it offered up for them. If we help the poor souls, they will in turn pray to God for us and He will hear their prayers. For Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy" (Matth. V, 7).

4. It is a good practice every evening when the Angelus rings, to say one Our Father and the following prayer for the poor souls: **"Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace! Amen."**

Let us also look to it that we save ourselves from long, severe suffering in Purgatory! Let us guard not only against mortal, but also against venial, sins. Let us do penance here on earth for our past sins by patiently bearing our trials and by practising voluntary self-denial. Let us avail ourselves of the indulgences offered by the Church.

Who are those that go to Purgatory?

Those go to Purgatory who die in the grace of God, but still have sins to atone for.

The Last Wish of St. Monica

St. Augustine in his "Confessions" (Book IX, ch. 11, 13) relates the following about his mother, St. Monica:

Monica had had a grave prepared for herself by the side of her husband in their home in Africa. But later she lived with her son Augustine in Italy, far away from their home. Now it was her earnest desire to be buried by the side of her husband, with whom she had lived in great harmony. Gradually, however, she became indifferent to such things, as her thoughts were more and more directed towards God and eternity. On her return journey home she stayed for some time in the Italian port of Ostia. Here she continually spoke of death and how gladly she would die now that her son was completely converted. Her friends asked her whether she did not dread being buried so far away from home. She replied: "Nothing is far from God; nor is it to be feared lest at the end of the world He should not recognize the place whence He has

to raise me up." She cared nothing for a splendid funeral, nor did she wish to have a fine tombstone. When she was stricken by a mortal illness in Ostia, she said to Augustine and his brother: "Bury your mother here!" Augustine's brother said he would prefer her to die in her own country. But Monica replied: "Lay this body anywhere; have no care about it. Only this I ask of you, remember me at the Lord's altar, wherever you may be!"

Such were the words of a truly Christian woman, who passed away about the year 400 A. D.

CHAPTER XXXI

Hell

1. He who dies in the state of mortal sin, dies as an enemy of God and will be cast into hell.

The greatest cause of the suffering of the damned is the knowledge that they are parted for ever from God, the eternally good and eternally beautiful. With indescribable longing their hearts desire this highest good; but they may never behold Him, nor draw near to Him. They are for ever excluded from the communion of the Children of God and the immeasurable joys of the angels and saints.

The damned are also tortured by a terrible *fire*. Jesus said He would say to the sinners at the General Judgment: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matth. XXV, 41). In spite of this fire, a terrible darkness pervades hell. It is "a land of lamentations and darkness, where are shades of death, and no order, but everlasting horror dwelleth" (Job X, 22). Again: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matth. XIII, 42). In addition to this, the damned are continually reproached by their consciences: "You are yourself to blame for your misery. God made every effort to save you; but you did not want to be saved." These qualms of conscience the Saviour calls the "worm that dieth not" (Mark IX, 43). No one can comfort the damned; no one loves them; they hate and curse one another.

2. The most terrible thing about the torments of hell is that they last for ever. Out of hell there is no redemption. Jesus has foretold that He will say at the last day: "Depart from me,

ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" And after describing the last judgment, He added: "These [the damned] shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting." (Matth. XXV, 46.) He also said: "It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, . . . where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished" (Mark IX, 44, 47). St. John writes in the Apocalypse (XIV, 11): "The smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever: neither have they rest day nor night."

Why does God inflict eternal punishment on grievous sinners? Because it is a terrible crime to rebel against His Supreme Majesty. An infinitely great crime merits an infinitely great punishment. The punishment of hell lasts for ever also for this reason because after death there will be no more chance of conversion. Holy Scripture says: "As the tree falls, to the south or to the north, so it will lie" (Eccles. XI, 3). He that dies an enemy of God, will remain an enemy of God, and therefore will be cast out by God for ever. If it were possible to be converted after death, most people would put off their conversion until then, and scarcely anyone would serve God here on earth.

3. Because out of hell there is no redemption, we must do our utmost to escape being cast into that dread abyss. Let us often think of hell, especially when we are tempted to commit mortal sin. St. Augustine writes: "Let us descend into hell frequently, as long as we live, in order that we may not have to go there after death!" Let us not be like the light-minded, whose only thought is to "enjoy life" and who take no care about the future. To such as these the words of Jesus apply: "Woe to you that now laugh, for you shall mourn and weep" (Luke VI, 25).

Who will go to hell?

They that die in mortal sin will go to hell.

Has No One Come Back?

Unbelievers deny the existence of the life beyond. "No one has ever come back," they say, "to tell us what the next life is like!"

Even if no one had ever come back, we have a complete guaranty that there is another life in the words of Jesus Christ, who, as God, is omniscient and the Lord of eternity. He has described to us the Last Judgment, after which we shall enter into eternal life and has added: "Heaven and earth shall pass, but my word shall not pass" (Matth. XXIV, 35).

But dead men *have* come back from the other world, and *have* left behind testimony of their experience. A great many well attested cases are recorded by Dr. Robert Klimsch in his book, "Leben die Toten?" (Do the Dead Live?). The instances are all taken from the official records of the Holy See concerning beatification.

Several cases of the damned from hell appearing to the living are related by one of the most eminent ecclesiastical writers in France, Monsignor de Ségur. One of these instances concerns Ségur's own family. Ségur's maternal grandfather, Count Rostopchine, was, at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, governor of Moscow and on very friendly terms with General Count Orlow, who was renowned for his courage, but unfortunately as unbelieving as he was courageous. One day after a sumptuous supper, General Orlow and one of his friends, General V., jested about religion, and especially about hell. "But," said Orlow, "suppose there should be something behind the curtain?" "Well," answered General V., "let the one of us who dies first, come back and tell the other how it looks behind the curtain." Orlow agreed, and both men, already growing old, made a compact, giving their word of honour to keep it. Some weeks later war broke out, and General V. entered the field in the Russian army. One morning Count Rostopchine's door in Moscow flew open, and Count Orlow burst in half dressed and white as a corpse. "I have seen General V.!" he cried. Count Rostopchine did not understand what Orlow meant, and the latter was so excited that he could scarcely answer Rostopchine's questions. At last he grew calmer and related the following: "Half an hour ago as I was lying in bed resting, both curtains were suddenly pulled aside, and I saw General V. standing two paces away. He was deadly pale and, holding his right hand on his breast, he said to me: 'There *is* a hell, and I am in it!' Then he disappeared."

Count Rostopchine, himself now thoroughly frightened, tried to soothe his friend, saying: "You only imagined it. Your brain was heated, or else you dreamt it." Finally he ordered his carriage to be got ready and had Count Orlow, still terribly unstrung, taken back to his hotel. Ten or twelve days after this incident an army courier brought the news of the death of General V. On the same morning on which Count Orlow had appeared, V. had gone out to view the position of the enemy; a musket ball pierced his heart, and he fell dead. The apparition undoubtedly was real and by no means the product of an overheated imagination.

The Hermit's Device

A hermit in the desert was tormented by strong temptations to commit mortal sin. He lit a fire and held his bare feet closer and closer to it. The heat hurt him very much. "The fire of hell hurts much more!" he said to himself, and the desire to sin passed away.

We do not need to light any real fire in temptation; but we may picture to our minds the fire of hell and think how one mortal sin can cast us into this terrible furnace.

CHAPTER XXXII

On What Our Faith Is Founded

1. On what is our faith founded? We know of the existence of God through reason. Our faith is founded on divine revelation. God revealed a great deal to the Old Testament Jews. He spoke to Adam, Abraham, and other ancient Patriarchs. He also spoke to Moses, David, and many other prophets. These divine revelations have come down to us unchanged. For God in the Old Covenant bade certain holy men to write down what He had revealed, and in writing it down, those men were entirely under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Therefore what they wrote is the Word of God. It is called *Holy Scripture* or *Bible,* of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament includes among others the five books of Moses, in which the ancient history of the human race and that of the Israelites is related; the Psalms, songs of wondrous fervour, which King David and other divinely inspired men recorded; the Proverbs of Solomon; Ecclesiastes (also written by King Solomon), the Book of Wisdom, the Book of Jesus Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, etc.

2. God revealed the most and greatest truths to men through His Son, Jesus Christ. Christ taught publicly in Palestine for three years. The doctrines which He taught have come to us unchanged. For Christ bade His Apostles to announce His doctrines to their contemporaries and to posterity. In order to make the Apostles infallible teachers of the truth, He sent them the Holy Ghost after His Ascension into Heaven. The Holy Ghost gave them full understanding of the teaching of Jesus

and revealed to them many new truths. The Apostles first announced by word of mouth what Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost had revealed to them and handed the "deposit of faith" on to their successors. The Apostles also wrote down, or caused to be written by their disciples, a part of the divine revelations. In writing they were guided by the Holy Ghost. Thus the New Testament came into existence.

The most important books of the New Testament are the four Gospels, that is, four accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus given by two Apostles, Matthew and John, and two disciples of the Apostles, Mark and Luke. The Gospels are the holiest and most beautiful books in existence. Every Catholic should know them by heart. The New Testament includes further: the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke, as well as the Epistles (most of them by St. Paul) and the Apocalypse of St. John, describing the future fate of the Kingdom of God.

3. Which books were written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and belong to Holy Scripture, is announced to us by the Catholic Church, who since the time of the Apostles has been instructed by Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. She guards the Holy Scriptures against any change and authoritatively explains their meaning. For the Bible is difficult to understand and many passages therein admit of several interpretations; so that without the help of the Church we could never be certain just what they meant.

The Gospels and the other books of Sacred Scripture were originally written in Hebrew or Greek and were afterwards translated into other languages. Many extant translations, however, are inaccurate or wrong. Therefore the Church has decreed that Sacred Scripture may be read only in an edition that is prepared by Catholics and approved by a bishop. Even in an exact translation there is much that is difficult to understand, and therefore only those editions can be approved by the bishops which are provided with explanatory notes. The Church regards Holy Scripture as the Word of God, treats it with the greatest reverence, and demands

that the faithful do the same. It is a sin to distort the words of Holy Scripture or to make a jest of them.

4. Sacred Scripture does not contain all that God has revealed. Much of that which Jesus and the Holy Ghost revealed to the Apostles has been handed down by word of mouth; for example, which books belong to Holy Scripture, that children should be baptized, that oil should be applied at Confirmation, and so forth. Those truths which were proclaimed by the Apostles by word of mouth and handed on by their successors, are called *tradition*. St. Paul refers to this when he writes: "Stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle" (2 Thess. II, 14). St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, writes: "In these matters, upon which the Holy Scripture does not pronounce definitely, the custom of the Christian people and the institutions of our predecessors must be our standard." Gradually tradition also came to be written down, especially by the Fathers of the Church, who were saintly ecclesiastical writers of the early centuries of Christianity.

5. The teaching Church takes the Divine Revelation from Holy Scripture and tradition and explains it to us. In this the Church is preserved from all error by Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost.

Thus the Church teaches us what God has revealed and is divinely guided in her teaching. When we believe the Church, we believe God Himself. In particular we believe the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who continues to speak to us through the Church. He has expressly assured us that when we hear His Church, we hear Him (Luke X, 16).

In this way our faith is perfectly certain. In supernatural matters we should not rely on reason alone, for it is too weak. Let us not rely on other people either, for human beings err continually and believe one thing today, and another tomorrow. Let us rather depend on God and His Church, for God cannot

err or mislead, and the Church, directed by Him, cannot misdirect us in matters of salvation.

On what is the Catholic faith based?

The Catholic faith is based on Divine Revelation.

Where can we find that which God has revealed?

We can find part of that which God has revealed in Holy Scripture or the Bible, and part in that which has been handed down to us by word of mouth or tradition.

From whom can we learn what God has revealed?

We can learn what God has revealed from the teaching Church.

How an Unbelieving Doctor Learned to Believe

The famous oculist, Dr. George Bull, of Paris, was born in Canada of Anglican parents. From his earliest days the Catholic Church had been misrepresented to him. When he was a university student, he received from his colleagues some immoral books, among which was an untrue account of an escaped nun. After reading this book, Bull regarded all priests with suspicion, and when he saw a convent, he thought of nothing but the wickedness of those who dwelled there. He also ceased to pray and soon entirely lost his faith in God and in Jesus Christ. But his heart remained empty and he was dissatisfied.

In 1886 Dr. Bull emigrated to Paris, where he became a practising physician. Once when he had been treating a Protestant lady from America for several weeks, he told her how discontented he was with his want of belief. The lady advised him to say the following prayer every day: "Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy divine love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created anew, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth!" It is a Catholic prayer, and the lady said she had found great consolation in reciting it. Dr. Bull promised her he would say it every day, and he kept his word. Scarcely had a couple of weeks passed when he felt an impulse to read Holy Scripture, especially the New Testament. At every page he read, he said to himself: "What is written there is true,—Jesus of Nazareth was God." He also learned from the Gospels that Jesus founded a Church, and that

this Church must still exist. The question was: "Where is this Church today? Is it perhaps the Catholic Church?" Something within him impelled him to inquire more closely into the claims of this Church. He read Catholic books and assisted devoutly at Catholic services. Finally he became convinced that the Catholic Church was the Church mentioned in the Gospels and came over into the fold (1892).

He wrote a great many letters to his mother about his conversion. In these letters he invariably repeated how happy he was in the Catholic Church. "I have never been so happy before," he writes in one letter. He attributed his conversion to the prayer he said to the Holy Ghost and to the graces he obtained through this prayer. In one of his letters to his mother he writes: "It is appalling to think how much the Church of God has been misrepresented by her enemies. When I think of it, I am amazed that I have lived forty years in complete ignorance regarding this Church, surrounded by the prejudices of youth, which I had acquired from the absurd chatter of people, who were as ignorant as myself." All this is told in a book which he himself wrote and which bears the title, "Why I Became a Catholic." The following extract from a letter written by his widow is quoted in the book: "On the day his confessor told him that his end was near, he [Dr. Bull] said to his wife, smiling: 'Do you hear what good news Fr. Edward has just brought me?' When his wife wept, he said to her: 'Do not weep! Do not grieve the Sacred Heart of Jesus! He is sending us happiness. Do not receive it with tears.' His last words were: "Holy Ghost—God Jesus." He died on the last day of the year 1910, about midnight.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Faith God Requires of Us

1. Having revealed so much about Himself and the way to eternal happiness, God demands strictly that we should believe in His revelations, that is, that we should receive them as absolutely true. **"He that believeth not shall be condemned,"** Jesus has said (Mark XVI, 16). "Without faith it is impossible to please God," St. Paul writes (Hebr. XI, 6). God requires faith from us because it is very wrong not to believe in Him, from whom all truth is derived, and because without faith we cannot love or serve Him, nor can we be united with Him.

All that God revealed has been entrusted by Jesus Christ to the Catholic Church, to be guarded by her and preached to men. To enable her to perform this task, Jesus has bestowed upon the Church the gift of *infallibility*. In return He requires that we should believe the Church just as we believe Him. He said to His Apostles and their successors: **"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me"** (Luke X, 16). Hence it is our strict duty to believe whatever the Catholic Church teaches.

2. We must not be indifferent in our faith, saying: "It is all the same what we believe and to which church we belong." Jesus would not have taken so much pains to teach us the truth if it were all the same what we believe. Our reason tells us that it cannot be a matter of indifference whether we believe the most important things to be true or false. To assist at divine services in other than Catholic churches is a sign that

we are indifferent in our faith. This is strictly forbidden by the Catholic Church.[1]

3. God is not content with a weak faith. He requires us to believe firmly and to have not the least doubt that His Word is true. A firm faith alone can give us a satisfying support through life. If, through weakness of understanding, or as a consequence of wicked conversations or the promptings of the devil, doubts arise within us, we must ward them off, and rekindle our faith. This can be done by the words: "O my God, I believe in Thee! O Jesus, I place my trust in Thy Word; I believe in Thy Church, for Thou art with it! O my God, strengthen my faith!" It is also recommended to seek an explanation of any matter that is not clear to us by consulting a priest or some well instructed lay friend or a good Catholic book.

4. God also requires that we should have a *steadfast* faith. We must not allow ourselves to be turned away from our faith by any threat or danger. We may not deny our faith outwardly, that is, act as though we did not believe in God, in Jesus Christ, or in His Church. Nay, whenever the honour of God or our neighbour's salvation demand it, we must confess our faith openly. For Jesus has said: **"Everyone that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven; but he that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven"** (Matth. X, 32–33).

5. A dead faith is not sufficient for salvation. When Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark XVI, 16), He means a *live* faith, that is, one according to which our whole life and conduct are ordered. He that lives according to the faith will become more and more certain and happy in his faith.

[1] Merely to be present at the funeral or marriage of relations or acquaintances holding a different belief from us does not count as taking part in the services of a sect.

6. Faith is the foundation and the beginning of our salvation. It is absolutely essential to our eternal happiness. But we cannot acquire it by ourselves. It is a gift of God, a light shed by God into our souls. Therefore, we should often ask God for the gift of faith. But we, on our side, have to preserve our faith most scrupulously and nourish it by attentively reading and hearing the Word of God. We should often kindle it and guard against the dangers that threaten it, especially intercourse with unbelievers and books, newspapers and magazines hostile to the faith.

"O my God, I believe in Thee! For Thou hast revealed Thyself to us and Thou art Truth itself. O Jesus, I trust in Thy word, for Thou art the Son of God! I believe in Thy Church, for Thou art with it all days even to the end of the world. I thank Thee for having called me to the true Catholic faith. I wish to live and die in that faith. O God, strengthen my faith!"

Let us often rekindle our faith by reciting the Apostles' Creed.

What must we believe?

We must believe what God has revealed and what the Church teaches.

Why must we believe what God has revealed?

We must believe what God has revealed because God is the truth and because He strictly demands faith from us.

Why must we believe what the Catholic Church teaches?

We must believe what the Catholic Church teaches because Jesus Christ speaks to us through the Church and because He commands us to hear the Church.

St. Stephen, the First Martyr

Constancy of faith has been most beautifully shown by those who have confessed the Catholic religion at the price of their lives,—the so-called "Martyrs of Christ."

The first of these Martyrs was St. Stephen. The Apostles had

elected him as their assistant and ordained him "deacon." As such he zealously preached Jesus Christ to the Jews. They tried to refute his teaching, but they were no match for his wisdom and enlightenment. Then they dragged him before the Sanhedrin and accused him of reviling the Temple and the law of Moses. Stephen boldly professed his faith in the Saviour and reproached the judges for their betrayal and murder of Jesus. The judges ground their teeth with fury. Stephen now saw his life threatened. He looked up to Heaven and saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. He cried out: "Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Furious at this open confession of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, they cried out and stopped their ears, that they might not hear the hated name of Jesus, and flung themselves upon him, drove him out of the city, and stoned him. But Stephen prayed: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" and finally cried: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." When he had uttered these words, "he fell asleep in the Lord." Good men buried his body and mourned for him. But his soul went to his Master, whom he had so courageously "confessed before men."

The Martyrs of Uganda

In the kingdom of Uganda in Central Africa the Catholic religion was preached from the year 1879 onwards. It soon had many followers, among whom were the pages of the king. The pure life they now led did not please the wicked ruler. He was further instigated by the Mohammedans who urged that the missionaries were spies, who were going to bring Uganda under the rule of the white race, *i. e.,* Europeans. So he forbade, under penalty of death, that anyone should be instructed by the missionaries and had several neophytes put to death, among them the tutor of the royal pages. Most of the latter were not yet baptized but they were preparing to receive this Sacrament. On the afternoon of the day on which their tutor was beheaded, a number of pages came running to the missionaries and cried: "We have to die! Please baptize us at once!" They were given Baptism, for most of them had been instructed in the faith during two or more years and therefore were well prepared. As they took leave of the missionaries, the boys said: "If we have to die, it won't matter much; if only they do not harm you!"

In the evening twelve more pages came to be baptized. The next day all the boys were summoned before the king, who in a terrible voice threatened those among them that were Christians saying, "I shall have you all beaten to death!" They answered, "It is well, Sire, have us beaten to death!" They were cast into prison. After some time the king summoned them again and repeated his threat. But they said, "We are in your power, Sire, you can have us beaten to death; but we cannot give up our religion!"

They were led to their death. Nine of them were put to death in different ways. Thirteen others were tied together, placed on a heap of logs on a hill and burned by a slow fire, so that their agony might be prolonged. Not one of them yielded. In the midst of the most terrible suffering they prayed together until one voice after another became silent in death. The head executioner took pity on the three youngest boys, and led them aside, hoping that the sight of the agony of their companions would make them yield. At last he had them taken back to prison. The three children now saw their hopes shattered and said to the executioner: "Why will you not kill us also? We are Christians as well as the others who have been burned. We have not denied our religion, and we will not do so. Why do you put off our fate?" The executioner did not listen to their complaints, however, and they were allowed to live. The twenty-two pages suffered martyrdom in the year 1886. In 1920 these youthful heroes were beatified by Pope Benedict XV. Since the persecution the Catholic religion has flourished in Uganda, although many Christians were put to death at that time.

The Severest Test

In the last days before the coming of the Judge the faithful will have to stand the severest test of their steadfastness. For Jesus prophesied about those days to His followers: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be pestilences, and famines, and earthquakes in places. Now all these are the beginnings of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death: and you shall be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be scandalized, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall seduce

many. And because iniquity has abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold. But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (Matth. XXIV, 7-13). St. Paul writes: "If the day of the Lord [the Last Day] were at hand, let no man deceive you by any means, for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God [He is called Antichrist, *i. e.*, adversary of God] "whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of his mouth; and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thess. II, 3–4, 8).

Let us practice fidelity to Jesus, so that we may remain steadfast in case we should live to see that terrible time.

PART II

WHAT GOD DEMANDS OF US

CHAPTER I

How We Should Love God

The beginning of the way to Heaven is to believe what God has revealed. This has been dealt with in the first part of this book. But there is something more to be done. Once a young man asked our Divine Saviour: "Good master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?" And Jesus answered: **"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments"** (Matth. XIX, 16–17).

1. A doctor of the laws asked the Saviour: "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" And Jesus answered: **"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"** (Matth. XXII, 36–39). But the Saviour tells us through His Apostle John: "He that loveth not, abideth in death" (1 John III, 14).

What an exceeding great honour and happiness it is for us that Almighty God sets a value on our love and asks for it so eagerly! Let us then fulfil His wishes.

2. God deserves all our love because He loves us so much. He has created us. He has adopted us as His children and cares for us continually. He is ready to pardon our sins. "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (John III, 16). The Son of God died on the

cross for our sins. Further, He gives Himself to us in the Sacrament of the Altar, as food for our souls. Finally, God wants to give Himself to us in Heaven so that we may enjoy indescribable happiness for ever. Can we imagine a greater love? "Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us" (1 John IV, 19).

God deserves all our love also for this reason, that He possesses in Himself all that is noble and beautiful in the highest degree. He is an unfathomable ocean of goodness, beauty, and glory.

3. God Himself has kindled charity in our hearts in Baptism. We have to preserve this love by prayer and by receiving the Sacraments, by kindling this love within us more and more frequently, and by practising it more zealously. We can kindle it by repeating the words: "O my God, I love thee with my whole heart! I love Thee above all things, for Thou art infinitely good and beautiful, and Thou dost demand that I love Thee!" We practise charity as often as we do good for the love of God, especially when it means sacrifice on our part. Jesus has said: **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, He it is that loveth me"** (John XIV, 21).

4. We sin against the commandment to love God if we are indifferent to God and prefer creatures to Him. This is done especially by mortal sin. For if we commit a mortal sin, we love some creature more than God and become separated from God through love of the creature. What foolishness, to prize the creature more highly than the Creator! What ingratitude towards our most loving father! God requires of us that we should die rather than be unfaithful to Him. He that is not resolved to suffer death rather than commit a mortal sin, has not the love which God demands of him (cfr. Matth. X, 37–39; Luke XIV, 26). But God has also promised: "He that shall lose his life for me, shall find it" (Matth. X, 39), *i. e.*, God will give him eternal life in return for his sacrifice. By

continually living a life of sin, one becomes estranged from God and may even begin to hate Him. To hate God is the most terrible of all sins.

5. To love God is the greatest happiness. For if we love God, we shall be loved by Him, we shall possess His grace, nay, God Himself abides in us, directs for our best all that happens, and keeps us prepared for a happiness that will never end. "He that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him" (1 John IV, 16). "To them that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. VIII, 28). "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. II, 9).

Why does God merit all our love?

God merits all our love because He loved us first and because He is infinitely good and beautiful.

St. Aloysius

Love of God was the keynote of the lives of all the saints. A shining example was St. Aloysius, patron and protector of Christian youth.

Aloysius was born in 1568 as the eldest son of Ferdinand Gonzaga, ruling margrave of Castiglione near Mantua. Before him was a life filled with riches and splendour. But while still a child, Aloysius turned his heart entirely to God, and despised the pleasures of the world. His greatest joy was to hold intercourse with God in prayer. As soon as he knew his way through the paternal castle, he used often to disappear and could not be found. Only after a long search he would be discovered in some remote corner, on his knees, his hands joined in prayer. At the age of nine years he promised the Blessed Virgin that he would, like her, remain chaste all his life. He was very severe in his treatment of his body in order that no sinful pleasure would arise within him. He lived on bread and water for three days in the week. He often scourged himself until blood came. And in his whole life he not only never committed a mortal sin, but not

even one serious venial sin. He was destined to succeed his father as ruler of the country. From the age of thirteen to fifteen he was a page at the court of the King of Spain. Here he made the resolution to renounce the world and to enter the Society of Jesus, in order that he might belong entirely to God. After years of pleading he at last obtained permission from his father. He was then seventeen years old. Before entering the Order, he formally renounced, in his brother Rudolph's favour, his claim to the margraveship and his paternal inheritance. When the deed of abdication was signed, Aloysius said to his brother: "My dear Rudolph, which of us do you suppose is the happier, you or I? Most assuredly, I am the happier." All those who were present were deeply moved at his words.

Aloysius now entered the Society of Jesus in Rome. More and more the love of God absorbed his whole being. He prayed for hours without the least distraction. Often, when he spoke about God or heard Him spoken of, his pale countenance would flush. He studied zealously in order to become a priest and he burned with the desire to be sent as missionary among the pagans, to gain souls for God. Meanwhile he performed many works of mercy. He often went through the streets of Rome with a beggar's bag, to collect alms for the poor and the sick. He was impelled to this by his love of God, who regards what we do for our neighbour as done for Himself.

In the year 1591 famine and plague were rife in Italy and Rome. Again Aloysius went forth to beg for the sick poor. But this did not suffice him. He persisted so long in asking his superiors for permission to nurse the plague-stricken, that they at last allowed him to do so. He devoted himself to this task of love with the greatest self-sacrifice. One day Aloysius found a man lying on the public street, ill from the plague. He at once took him on his shoulders, carried him to the hospital, and nursed him. But Aloysius himself went home ill and was put to bed. He believed he was dying, but was not afraid. He had thought of death frequently and was well prepared for it. He was full of joy now at the thought of Heaven being so near. His illness turned into a consumptive fever, and he lived only three months longer. Meanwhile he longed more and more to die. When the attendant brought him medicine, Aloysius asked him smilingly if he believed these drops would prevent him from going to Heaven. He never prayed for recovery. At last the brother who nursed him told Aloysius that

he could only live about a week longer. Thereupon he was visited by a fellow brother, whom he greeted with the question whether he knew the joyful news. He was to die within a week! And he begged the brother to say a "Te Deum" with him for this grace. To another brother Aloysius declared: "Gladly I go, gladly!" He asked to have a letter written to his mother, desiring her to rejoice with him because God was calling him to Heaven. During the night of the 20th-21st June, his superior asked him how he was. "I am going away," was the answer. "Where?" the superior asked. "To Heaven, if my sins do not hinder me!" He became weaker and weaker. The blessed candle was put into his hand. He kept his eyes fixed on the crucifix on the wall and pressed to his heart a smaller crucifix, to which was attached the plenary indulgence for the dying. Once more his lips moved, he uttered the word "Jesus," and passed away. He died in the year 1591, at the age of twenty-three years.

That Aloysius had really entered Heaven was revealed by God soon after his death by a great many miracles wrought through his intercession. Soon he was canonized by the Pope and given as patron and model to young people, especially students. His feast is kept on the 21st of June.

CHAPTER II

How We Should Love Our Neighbour

1. Jesus placed beside the commandment to love God that other commandment: **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."** Our neighbour is every man because every man is near and dear to us through God. Each one is, like us, an image and a child of God. Jesus Christ died for each one, as He died for us; and God requires of us that through love of Him we should also love all those who are His images and children and for whom He died. This universal love of one's neighbour was unknown before Jesus Christ came. Hence He calls the commandment to love our neighbour *His* commandment and says: "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" (John XV, 12). By saying that this is "like" the commandment to love God, Jesus showed us that love of neighbour is closely connected with love of God and, next to the love of God, our most important duty.

Even our enemies are our neighbours. Therefore Jesus Christ expressly commands us: **"Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you"** (Matth. V, 44). And He tells us that His Heavenly Father will not forgive us our offences if we do not forgive our brethren from our hearts (Matth. XVIII, 35). St. Paul says: "Be ye kind one to another, merciful, forgiving one another, even as God hath forgiven you in Christ" (Eph. IV, 32). Jesus has also given us the most beautiful example of love of one's enemies. He prayed for His enemies even when He was dying; nay, He died for those who had offended Him, for

sinners. At the same time we are not forbidden to defend ourselves against the attacks of our enemies, provided we do not hate them or return evil for evil.

2. Jesus Christ commands us to love our neighbours "as ourselves," for He has said: **"All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them"** (Matth. VII, 12). Further, Jesus requires that we should practise works of mercy so far as lies within our power and in accordance with our circumstances. On the Last Day He will say to those who stand on His right hand: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you covered me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me." Then the just will ask Him: "Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee; thirsty and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and covered thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison and came to thee?" Jesus will answer them: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." But the Judge will condemn those on his left because they were wanting in works of mercy.

3. Still more important than the corporeal are the spiritual works of mercy. In Holy Scripture the following spiritual works of mercy are especially recommended: to convert sinners, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubting, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive injuries, to pray for the living and the dead. He that does these works, especially converting sinners to the right path, with sweetness and gentleness, he that persuades those who are dangerously ill to become reconciled to God and to receive the Sacraments, will in this way perhaps save a great many souls from hell and gain them for God and Heaven. How gloriously God will re-

ward such work! But he that can save a soul in such a way and does not do it, may sin grievously against charity.

A work through which all the above-mentioned spiritual works of mercy are promoted is co-operation in erecting churches where they are needed. A work that in itself includes almost all the spiritual and corporeal works of mercy is supporting the missions in pagan countries.

4. By saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Jesus showed us that we may and should *love ourselves* also. He has taught us how we should love ourselves. We should seek our happiness only in God and in what is pleasing to God; sin can never make us happy. Furthermore, we should be far more attentive to the salvation of our souls than to the well-being of our bodies; for only that which we do for our souls has lasting value. Finally, in our care for our own happiness, we must not forget our neighbour. To seek only our own happiness, without troubling about our neighbour's, is selfish and unchristian.

5. Christian charity and Christian love of self can be united in the most beautiful way by a sense of social solidarity. For each one is placed by God into several communities: the family, the congregation, the State, the Church. Now if we desire not only to enjoy the advantages of these communities, but to be ourselves active in doing good to our fellow-members and making sacrifices for them, we have the right spirit. Without this spirit these communities and the common good cannot prosper. "One for all, all for one." God wants us to have this spirit, and exhorts us thereto in Sacred Scripture. "Charity . . . seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. XIII, 5). "Each one not considering the things that are his own, but those that are other men's" (Phil. II, 4). "Serve one another" (Gal. V, 13). "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; . . . there the Lord hath commanded blessing and life for evermore" (Ps. CXXXII).

Where religion wanes, charity and public-spiritedness disappear. We see this today, both keeping pace, the one vanishing with the other. But if we nourish religion in our hearts, social solidarity will be strengthened, and the common good will blossom forth anew.

Who is our neighbour?

Our neighbour is every man, both friend and enemy.

Why is every man our neighbour?

Every man is our neighbour because every man is an image of God, and Christ died for all men.

Christian Charity as Described by St. Paul

"Charity is patient, is kind: charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely: is not puffed up; is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Cor. XIII, 4–7). "He that loveth his neighbour, hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. XIII, 8), for then he also loves God, since Christian charity follows from the love of God. But as Jesus tells us (Matth. XXII, 40), on loving God and our neighbour dependeth the whole law.

St. Vincent de Paul

One of the greatest heroes of Christian charity was St. Vincent de Paul. He was born in 1576 as the son of poor peasants, not far from Bayonne, France. After he had become a priest he once had to make a short journey by sea. He was taken prisoner by pirates and sold as a slave in Tunis (Africa). By his charity and kindness he converted his fellow-slaves to a moral life and even won his master back to the Christian religion, which he had abandoned for the false religion of Mohammed. To escape being put to death by the Mohammedans, the master fled with him to France, and Vincent was free.

He now made a vow to devote his life entirely to caring for the poor and thus to serve the Lord in the persons of the poor. The poorest of all the poor at that time were the criminals who were chained to, and forced to row, the royal ships, called galleys.

These men had become quite hardened and embittered by their terrible lot. Scarcely anyone dared to approach them. Vincent de Paul had the greatest sympathy for these unfortunate ones. He had himself appointed spiritual director of the galley slaves, and as such procured for them all possible alleviations. Up to then the galley slaves, when ill, were left without care. This was altered by St. Vincent. When an infectious disease broke out among them, he had himself isolated with them on the ship, in order that he might nurse them. It is related that he once found among them a man who had been unjustly condemned and was in such despair that he was about to kill himself. Vincent de Paul removed his chains and put them on himself, exchanged clothes with him, and helped him to escape. For some time no one knew what had become of Vincent. They looked for him everywhere and at last found him among the slaves. The governor of Marseilles himself came and removed the saint's fetters.

Vincent also had great sympathy for the peasants, who for the most part were very ignorant in matters of religion. He went from village to village, instructing them and teaching them how to make a good general confession. The people thus gained peace of mind and indescribable consolation. Soon "missions" of this kind were asked for in many places. Vincent took other priests to help him in the work. Then he founded a special society of priests for this purpose,—the Society of the Mission, or "Lazarists" (so called from their first house in Paris, which had once been a hospital for lepers dedicated to St. Lazarus).

In order to help the sick poor who were without the needed care, Vincent founded a society of pious women and girls to nurse the sick poor for God's sake. Then he persuaded these women to lead a common life and wrote a rule for them. Thus a new religious community came into existence, that of the Sisters of Charity. Besides the usual three religious vows, the Sisters of Charity, like St. Vincent, take a further vow, namely, to serve Jesus in the sick poor. This society has become very wide-spread and brings down immeasurable blessings on mankind today. Even heretics and infidels have the greatest admiration for its work. For example, the godless Voltaire wrote: "Perhaps there is nothing in the world greater than the sacrifice made by the tender sex who renounce their beauty, youth, and high birth in order to relieve the endless human misery in the hospitals."

St. Vincent was constantly endeavouring to alleviate all kinds

of corporeal and spiritual misery. For example, he received foundlings, 300 to 400 of whom were abandoned every year in Paris by their mothers. He founded a poor-house for 5,000 people and an institute for the aged poor. He sent enormous sums of money which he had collected to Lorraine and other regions that had suffered in the Thirty Years' War. He was a magnificent model of every kind of charitable activity. He died in the year 1660, at the age of eighty-four years, and was canonized in 1737. His feast is kept on the 19th of July.

CHAPTER III

The Ten Commandments of God

1. In the two commandments concerning charity, God has briefly told us what our relations should be towards Him, towards our neighbour, and towards ourselves. He has explained this more fully in the Ten Commandments, which He made known on Mount Sinai amid earthquake, thunder, and lightning. They are:

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

4. Honour thy father and thy mother.

5. Thou shalt not kill.

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7. Thou shalt not steal.

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

God Himself proclaimed the Ten Commandents *in extenso.* The shorter form is used that we may remember them more easily.

2. God not only announced His Commandments to us from without, but also has written them into our conscience. The conscience is an inner voice which exhorts us to do good and to shun evil. Every person possesses this voice within him. It

can be suppressed, but not silenced entirely. It is part of our human nature, given to us by the Creator.

Our conscience tells us that we should believe in one God, that we should honour our parents, that we should not kill, and so on. Therefore the Ten Commandments existed before God definitely announced them on Mount Sinai. They apply to all ages. Jesus expressly ratified them for the New Covenant, saying: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

3. There are many reasons why we should keep the Commandments. God is our Lord and Creator; we belong to Him absolutely, and it is our duty to serve Him. God is our loving Father and has only commanded what is best for us. For, by keeping the commandments our minds are directed heavenward, our hearts are ennobled, and we shall lead happy, peaceful lives, both in the family and in the State. If all men loyally kept the Commandments of God, there would be no war and our earth would be next thing to a Paradise.

God Himself helps us to keep His Commandments. For, if we have a good will, he pours forth His charity into our hearts (Rom. V, 5), and charity makes all things easy. Hence Jesus says, "My yoke is sweet and my burden light" (Matth. XI, 30). Furthermore, if we keep His Commandments, God will reward us with a happiness so great that it cannot be described.

When God had announced His Commandments to the Israelites, they cried: "Let us do all that the Lord has commanded us!" Let this also be our firm, unswerving resolution.

CHAPTER IV

The First Commandment

SINS AGAINST THE FAITH

1. God Himself expressed the First Commandment as follows: "I am the Lord, thy God! . . . Thou shalt not have strange gods before me!" (Exod. XX, 2–3.) Therefore, God requires that we should acknowledge Him as our Lord and Master and give Him the honour that belongs to Him. An essential point of the honour we owe Him is that we believe in Him; but we should also hope in Him, love and adore Him.

2. To believe in God means to be firmly convinced that there is a God and to accept as true all that God has revealed. For a more detailed account of our obligation to have faith, see Chapter XXVI.

We sin against faith if, through our own fault, we are infidels or heretics. An infidel is one who does not believe in God or in Jesus Christ. A heretic is one who believes in God and Jesus Christ, but does not believe as the Catholic Church teaches.

It is also a sin against faith to be indifferent to one's faith or to doubt deliberately, to fall away from the true faith or to deny it, to endanger one's faith by speaking against it or listening to others speak against it; also by reading newspapers or books hostile to the faith.

Newspapers and books hostile to faith are those which attack the Catholic Church and her servants. They set forth many lies and perversions of Catholic doctrine. He that has not studied

his religion thoroughly is unable to refute these falsehoods and may easily go astray in his faith. To such books and papers belong also those that depict the Catholic faith as something superfluous. He who makes a habit of reading such literature will soon become indifferent and will end by losing his faith. Such reading is one of the greatest dangers to faith and salvation; hence to read such books and papers is no light sin.

Another sin against faith is to endanger the souls of others by writing against the faith or by spreading or supporting literature hostile to faith.

3. Faith is a great gift from God, and it is a boon to us that God has made it a strict duty to adhere to it. For faith shows us the road to Heaven and is our greatest consolation even in this life. It is a treasure with which all the wealth in the world cannot compare.

What does God command in the First Commandment?

In the First Commandment God commands that we should believe in Him, hope in Him, love and adore Him.

When do we sin against faith?

We sin against faith:

1. If we do not believe or if we doubt in matters of faith.

2. If we fall away from our faith entirely, or deny it.

3. If we speak against the faith, or wilfully listen to others speaking against it.

4. If we read or spread literature against the faith.

GOD—and I

"I am the Lord, Thy God, I have created the world and thee. I have made thee to my image and showered my gifts on thee. Thou wast involved in the sin of Adam and excluded from Heaven. But I gave my only Son to suffer and die for thee. Thus I have saved thee from the torments of hell. I sent my Spirit into thy heart and made thee my child. I surround thee with my paternal care and direct all things for thy best. I feed thee with my Son's Flesh and Blood, that thou mayest gain eternal life.

Thou hast often been a faithless child: yet I have always pardoned thee. Then hear what I ask of thee: Confess me to be thy Lord and God! Be mine. Consecrate to me thy body, soul and life, and I will bestow on thee yet greater things—my peace in this life and in Heaven, myself. Such will be thy reward. Thou shalt behold me, and be blessed for all eternity."

O Lord, my God! I thank Thee, for Thou hast deigned to look on me. How can I praise Thy goodness enough? I bow down in the dust before Thee. I give myself wholly to Thee. Thy highest gifts to me—understanding and free will—I consecrate to Thee. I will always think of Thee, always desire Thee. I will believe Thy every word and always be true to my faith, confessing Thee before all the world. In all my needs I will depend on Thee. I love Thee with my whole heart, with all my soul and all my strength. I give Thee all I have. I will live for Thee and die for Thee. I repent with my whole heart that I have broken faith with Thee; on my knees I beg Thy forgiveness. Grant that I may ever love Thee and live according to Thy will. Grant that I may one day behold Thee in Heaven! Then I shall ask no earthly gifts, for Thou alone art my happiness, my all.

Unbelieving Thomas

When Jesus appeared to the Apostles for the first time after His Resurrection, Thomas was not with them. The other Apostles afterwards told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But Thomas said: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." A week later the Apostles were assembled again, and this time Thomas was with them. Then Jesus came again, and after greeting them, said to Thomas: "Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas cried out: "My Lord and My God!" But Jesus said to him: "Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed" (John XX, 24 sqq.).

There are many things we must believe on the word of Jesus Christ and His Church, though we do not see and cannot understand them. The whole supernatural world is concealed from us for the present,—hid behind a curtain, as it were, and we can only catch a glimpse now and then. By this means God puts to

the test our good will and our love of divine and heavenly things. Now if we believe on God's word what we cannot see, and direct our whole life in accordance with this faith, God will one day reveal Himself to us and give us the glory in which we have believed, making us happy for all eternity.

CHAPTER V

The First Commandment (Continued)

CHRISTIAN HOPE

It is a part of the honour we owe to God that we should hope in Him and trust Him.

1. We should *hope* in God, that is, we should expect from Him with full confidence whatever He has promised us.

God has promised us an eternal, indescribable happiness in Heaven. Jesus says: "The just shall [after the Last Judgment] enter into life everlasting." Through His Apostle Paul He tells us: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. II, 9). We should desire and strive with all our might after this happiness in Heaven. We shall certainly attain it if we do our part. For God has also promised us all the help we need to attain eternal bliss. He is always ready to assist us with His grace, so that we may keep His commandments, overcome temptations, bear our cross patiently, and thus merit Heaven. Jesus promised us this when He said: "Your Father in heaven [will] give the good Spirit to them that ask Him" (Luke XI, 13). "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John VI, 57). God will forgive us our sins if we repent. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live" (Ezechiel XXXIII, 11).

God will also provide for our *temporal needs* in so far as this is necessary for our attaining eternal happiness. Jesus said:

"Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. . . . For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matth. VI, 25, 32, 33). And in the Psalms God tells us: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. XLIX, 15). Whatever may happen to us, God will direct all things for the best if we love Him. Through the Apostle Paul He assures us, "To them that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. VIII, 28).

God fulfils His promises with certainty, for He is infinitely faithful. Therefore we should have full confidence in Him.

2. Our confidence should be the greater, since God is omnipotent, infinitely good, and merciful. He is omnipotent, therefore He can make us infinitely happy and can help us in every trouble. He is infinitely kind; He is our Father who has created us to His image and has received us as His children when we were baptized. He is infinitely merciful; in order that we should not perish, He gave His only begotten Son to suffer the most ignominious death. Jesus, the Son of God, voluntarily suffered the greatest torments and sacrificed His life for us. From this we see how much God loves us and how anxious He is that we should be happy.

Let us, therefore, often pray: "O my God, I hope in Thee, for Thou art my almighty, infinitely kind and merciful Father and Saviour, and Thou hast promised to hear me, help me, and make me happy!" Let us say this prayer especially when in trouble or need.

If we hope and trust in God, we shall honour Him and receive from Him *rich graces*. "The Lord is good to them that hope in him" (Lament. III, 25). Firm hope in God and confident expectation of eternal happiness gives us wondrous strength to do great things for God, to resist evil firmly, to bear suffering

patiently. The hope of eternal happiness makes even death sweet.

3. But he that mistrusts God, offends Him; for he does not truly believe in the fidelity, omnipotence, and goodness of God. Much more does that person offend God who despairs in Him, that is, gives up confidence in God. Such a person repulses the grace of God and is on the road to perdition. The traitor Judas would have been forgiven, if he had turned to Jesus with confidence. But he despaired in God's grace, and therefore he was lost for ever.

On the other hand we must not be *presumptuous, i. e.,* unduly confident in expecting salvation without taking any trouble to merit Heaven; to commit sin after sin, confident that God will pardon us; to do nothing and yet expect that God will help us is presumption. God requires that we should do our part.

For what should we hope from God?

We should hope for eternal salvation and all the means of attaining it, especially help in doing good works and pardon for our sins.

May we also hope for temporal blessings from God?

We may also hope for temporal things from God if they help us to attain eternal salvation.

What are the sins against hope?

The sins against hope are despair and want of confidence, on the one hand, and, on the other, presumption.

The Beauty and Consolation of Christian Hope

Faith opens up to us a vision of a wonderland of incomprehensible beauty and happiness. But while we are granted a distant glimpse of all this happiness, this does not mean that we shall share it. Moses saw the Land of Promise from afar, but God said to him: "Thou shalt see the land before thee . . . but thou shalt not enter into it" (Deut. XXXII, 52). The more magnificent perspective we have of all the supernatural goods of that eternal state of bliss, the more impossible and the more incomprehensible ap-

pears the idea that such happiness can fall to our lot,—poor, suffering, sinning children of earth that we are.

Then a bright, celestial form bends down to us and says: "Lift up your heart! That which you behold in the light of faith is destined for you, and if you will, you can possess it for ever." God has promised you this eternal happiness, and He has promised you the means necessary to obtain it. Do not doubt, for what God has promised will be fulfilled without fail; you will never be disappointed in any of His promises.

This sweet voice is the voice of divine hope. This divine hope is a gift from Heaven, a free gift proceeding from the goodness of God, an angel of consolation sent to poor humanity. Humanity itself is unequal to such hope; and therefore hope is infused at Baptism by sanctifying grace. By this alone the human will is so elevated, rendered so firm and strong, that it enables a man to hope, efficaciously and surely, for the highest good.

What incalculable blessings this virtue brings into the whole life of man! Under its illuminating rays the true value of life becomes clear to us; an eternal recompense can be gained every moment if it is well employed. To be permitted to hope and to have such a hope expels all real unhappiness from the heart of the Christian. What do all the sufferings on earth amount to in view of the reward that awaits us at the end?

In this hope lies the answer to the anxious question: How can eternal love be compatible with so much misery and woe on earth? This hope approaches the weary beggar on the roadside and tells him: "Thou art blessed, poor man; look upward! Thine is the Kingdom of Heaven!" It visits the widow, pale and worn among her hungry children: "Blessed art thou! Thou shalt have thy fill!" It enters the house of mourning and tears: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted!" It summons all that are hated and repulsed by the world and treated with injustice, lacking help or protection: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in Heaven is exceeding great!"

He that bears this hope in his heart cannot be made really unhappy by the world or the vicissitudes of life; for suffering is to him not the same as unhappiness; he can suffer patiently, nay, rejoice in his suffering.

CHAPTER VI

The First Commandment of God (Continued)

ADORATION

1. In the First Commandment God also requires that we should adore Him, that is, that we should honour Him as our Highest Lord, to whom we belong and on whom we depend absolutely. We adore God when we say from our hearts: "O my God, Thou art infinitely great and glorious; compared with Thee, I am nothing. Thou art my Supreme Master. Thou hast created me. I belong to Thee entirely. I honour Thee as far as it lies in my power, and I submit to Thee wholly!"

To adore God is one of our most important duties. If we do not kill or injure our neighbour, if we do not lie and steal, but at the same time fail to adore God, we keep the fifth and the seventh Commandments, it is true; but we do not keep the first and most important Commandment and may not consider ourselves just. It is a privilege that we may turn to the infinitely great and sublime Creator of the World and speak to Him. It elevates and ennobles us and makes us like the angels. Adoration of God also leads to love of God, which, more than all else, makes us happy.

2. If we truly honour God as our highest Lord, we shall readily submit to His decrees. We shall not grumble if the weather is not as we should like it, or if God permits what is repugnant to us. Much rather we should say with the Saviour: "Father, not my will, but thine be done!"

3. We must adore God alone, not any creature, not even the Blessed Virgin Mary. We can and should, however, honour the

angels and saints in Heaven, because they are near to God; and we should ask them to intercede for us. The adoration of God is not injured by right veneration of the saints; rather we adore God the more in honouring His saints.

We should also honour images of the Divine Persons, the angels, and the saints. Good representations of God, of the angels, and of the saints help us to elevate our minds to Heaven and, above all, make prayer easier for us. But we should be careful that our veneration does not extend to the picture itself; it must always be directed to the holy persons who are represented by the images, and thus finally to God Himself. We should always endeavour to replace poor images of God and the saints by worthier ones.

We should also honour the remains of the saints, the so-called "relics." Here also our veneration should be for the person of the saint and ultimately for God. We should honour the bodies and relics of the saints because the saints served God so faithfully with these bodies, and because God will one day raise them up to eternal glory. We should, however, be cautious and not venerate false relics.

4. If we have true veneration for God, we shall also conduct ourselves reverentially towards living persons who are consecrated to God, as well as towards places and things that are dedicated to Him in a special way. Consecrated persons are ecclesiastics and religious, consecrated places are churches and cemeteries that have been blessed; things consecrated to God are the Sacraments as well as the vessels and vestments used at Holy Mass and in administering the Sacraments. Anyone who abuses consecrated persons, destroys or desecrates consecrated places, or who abuses sacred vessels, especially anyone who receives the Sacraments unworthily, commits the sin of *sacrilege.*

5. God holds our life and our fate in His hands. We should not believe that trifles have a mysterious influence upon our lot, such as, for example, that the number 13 brings ill luck, or that

Friday is a day of misfortune. This is superstition, contrary to the honour we owe to God. It is also superstition to ascribe to certain forms of prayer a secret power that has never been given to them by God or the Church, such as, for example, that certain prayers are unfailing in healing disease or as a protection against attacks.

The future is known to God alone. We can and may form conjectures or calculations about future events; but we should not desire to learn the future from the lines of the hand, from teacups or cards, by pouring out lead, or any such devices. Such foolishness is called *fortune-telling* and is a sin against the honour due to God; for it is, as it were, an attempt at encroaching upon the divine omniscience. Often, in such fortune-telling, there is the idea of learning the future through the help of evil spirits.

How do we sin against the First Commandment?

We sin against the First Commandment: (1) if we neglect prayer; (2) if we murmur against God's decrees; (3) if we believe in superstition or fortune-telling.

May we adore the angels and saints?

We may adore God alone; but we may honour the angels and saints and invoke their intercession.

A Soldier's Farewell

A short time before his death in the World War a Slovenian soldier, A. Beričič, addressed the following letter to his family: "I see now that death is certain. The musket-balls, shrapnels, Russian infantry, and Cossacks are close at hand. I feel urged to bid you farewell,—especially my little children and you, my guardian angel, my dear faithful wife, whom I honour beyond words. Oh, how I should like to clasp your hands in mine! How I should like to see my little ones and bless them! But as this is impossible, I send them my paternal blessing in the hope that it may accompany them through life until they attain everlasting happiness. Forgive me my failings and pray for me. I will

pray for you to God, that you may be resigned to His holy will. If He has decreed that I am to die, He knows the reason why. Certainly it is not to punish me and the others, but through love,—because I should not be so well prepared for death at any other time. Therefore, do not grieve too much. You must know that many will be left as you are left. And mine is an honourable death. My heart, too, is broken, but I know I shall not fall unless it is God's will. I have prayed that He may keep me if it is His holy will. I am writing this letter while on the march: that is why it is so badly written, and so disconnected. . . . My love to you all. Remember me in your prayers. Farewell until we meet again with Jesus, the Source of Love, and with Our Lady."

Modern Superstition

Wherever unbelief gains the upper hand, superstition flourishes. Man needs the spiritual, the supernatural, and if he no longer believes in the supernatural world that God has revealed to us, very often he is disposed to devote himself to an imaginary one. St. Paul prophesied that a time would come when men "will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. IV, 4). This is true especially with regard to *Occultism.*

"Occultism" means "secret science" or dealing with secret powers. The adepts of Occultism believe they have the power to read the hearts of men, to peer into the distant future, to see and hear the past and the future by merely willing it, to be present in different places at the same time, and so on; that man's power is limited by his "body"; that the more unconscious the latter is, as in a deep sleep, for example, the higher the soul can soar. They believe that besides the physical, man also has a semi-spiritual ("astral") body, and that by means of this astral body, he can be present in a different part of the world from that in which his physical body is. A great many Occultists—the Spiritists—maintain that they possess a higher knowledge and a higher power derived from communications with the spirits of the dead.

Now what are the actual facts? The conductor of an Occultist assembly calls upon one of those present to think of some number containing two figures, and then tells him what this number is. How is this to be explained? A person who thinks of a number very often unconsciously pronounces it aloud, but in so low a

voice that the ordinary person cannot see or hear it. Now certain persons have such an acute sense of sight or hearing that they can understand the slightest whisper or read a number from one's lips. Or the conductor leaves the hall while some one hides an object in the room. When he returns, the conductor takes this person by the hand and leads him to the concealed object. What really happens is that the person who hides the object shows by involuntary convulsive movements—to which the conductor is extremely sensitive—where the object is concealed.

Some persons can develop certain senses together with their memory in quite a special way, so that they can place themselves in a trance, *i. e.,* a sort of convulsion, or allow themselves to be put into such a state by someone else. Such persons are called mediums, because, in the opinion of the Spiritists, they are mediators in the intercourse of men with the spirit world. Mediums can, for example, read writing contained within an envelope which is not very thick. Often the medium announces at a *séance* that through him the spirit of some dead person speaks. He is able on such occasions to imitate the gestures peculiar to the dead person. But the communications received in this way "from the next world" are mostly silly and often immoral. Nothing is ever communicated that the medium could not have known beforehand. Sometimes the spirits themselves are said to appear, but only in a darkened room or in a red light. At one moment a hand comes into view, at another a face, or someone feels the touch of a hand. In the meantime one of the spectators seizes the "spirit," keeping his hold on him, and presently it appears that the "spirit" was none other than the medium himself. The "spirits" also like to make different objects, such as flowers or chairs, fly about in the darkened room. But here also it has often been proved that the mediums themselves produced the movements by means of a stick or a thread fastened to the object.

Certain happenings at *séances* have not been explained up to the present, it is true. Many critics of Occultism ascribe these happenings to spirits; but they could not be the spirits of departed men or women, but only evil spirits. There are others who expect that some day all the phenomena of Spiritism will be explained as effects of certain, as yet undiscovered, powers of nature.

However this may be, the one who meddles with Occultism is sure to be deceived. A good many of the phenomena are fraudulent. The excitement from these trances and also from looking

on at *séances* has driven many people to insanity and suicide. But, worst of all, the Christian who gives himself up to this foolish fad loses his faith; for the Occultists make statements that contradict the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, *e. g.*, that man is a part of the Deity, nay, that he is himself God, that the souls of the departed can come back to the world in different bodies and begin a new life, etc. Again the alleged spirits relate a great deal about the next world that contradicts Christian revelation. Thus they deny that the punishment of hell is eternal. Occultists deceive their disciples by telling them they are good Christians and their only aim is to understand Christianity rightly, not as the Catholic Church teaches it. The darkness, tension, and excitement that reign at *séances,* the seemingly wonderful happenings, all make the spectator only too much disposed to believe what is said on such occasions. If later, on reflection, he becomes aware of the deception, his newly acquired friends wind their web more and more closely around him by all kinds of illusions, and finally faith and salvation are lost to him.

Therefore, beware against this great danger! It is strictly forbidden by the Church to take part in meetings held to cite the spirits of the dead.

CHAPTER VII

The Second Commandment

1. By the Second Commandment God requires that we should pay Him a particular homage, honouring Him in our conversation and speaking of Him reverently.

If we fully realized the greatness and power of God, we should always pronounce His name in fear and trembling. Sacred Scripture says: "Holy and terrible is his name" (Ps. CX, 9). If, in addition, we fully realized the beauty and goodness of God, we should feel ourselves forced to praise and extol Him always. Scripture continually exhorts us to praise and extol God and His name, bidding us "Praise the Lord, ye children: praise ye the name of the Lord" (Ps. CXII, 1).

2. The name of God is taken in vain when it is pronounced thoughtlessly, that is, without any thought of God. The word "God" or the word "Jesus Christ" should not be used instead of "Oh!" or "Ah!" to express admiration or terror. Still less should these names or other holy words be used in anger. "Crucifix" also is a name of God when it refers to "the Crucified Saviour."

The greatest dishonour is shown to the divine name when one so far forgets oneself as to vilify and blaspheme God, our Creator and Father. This is *blasphemy,* one of the most grievous of sins. To use disrespectful language in regard to the Mother of God, or the other saints, or the Sacraments, is also to abuse God and therefore to commit blasphemy. It is possible to commit the sin of blasphemy also in thought (that is, when the thought is deliberate). Many a blasphemer has been snatched

away by death while in the very act of committing this sin.

It is also a form of blasphemy to mock religion. For religion comes from God. It shows the deepest ingratitude to ridicule religion, and only a degraded mind would consent to such an act. For religion is the greatest blessing we have. It is a priceless gift from God.

3. The name of God is invoked with special emphasis when taking an oath, that is, when swearing. *Swearing means calling upon God to witness that what we speak is true or that we will keep a promise.*

The name of God can either be honoured or taken in vain by swearing. When for some important reason God is called upon to witness something, of the truth of which we are perfectly convinced, then His name is honoured, for by so doing we confess that God knows everything and speaks only the truth. But God's name is taken in vain when, without urgent cause, He is called upon to witness some trifling matter. Jesus says: "I say to you not to swear at all [that is, generally speaking], but let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is over and above these, is of evil" (Matth. V, 34, 37).

It is a grievous sin to call God to witness something that is untrue or uncertain; for this is desiring to make God an accomplice in a lie. It is called a *false oath* or *perjury.* In Holy Scripture God says: "It shall come to the house . . . of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof" (Zach. V, 4).

If we strengthen a promise by an oath, we are more than ever obliged to keep the promise; he that does not keep a promise he has sworn to keep—if it is possible for him to keep it—commits perjury. But one may not take an oath to keep a sinful promise, such as, for example, to be avenged on one's enemy. Such an oath would be a mortal sin, and notwithstanding the oath, the promise would not be binding.

4. God's name is taken also when we make a *vow,* that is, when we bind ourselves before God or His saints to do something that is pleasing to God. For example, a sick man promises that, if he recovers, he will make a pilgrimage to Rome or to some shrine. If he has a real intention to bind himself when the promise is made, he must keep it, unless this proves impossible, for to break a vow is a sin. A vow should only be made after mature deliberation; it is also advisable to consult one's confessor about such a matter. Holy Scripture exhorts us: "If thou hast vowed [promised] anything to God, defer not to pay it. It is much better not to vow, than after a vow not to perform the things promised" (Eccles. V, 3, 4).

A mere resolution is not a vow and hence does not bind under pain of sin; but it is advisable to keep resolutions that have been made deliberately.

If we reverence the name of God in all our thoughts and words, our whole being will be ennobled and rendered submissive, modest, and reverential. In this way we can best observe the Second Commandment. To thee Our Father we pray: "Hallowed be Thy name!" In a sense this involves a promise on our part: "O Father in Heaven, I will always honour Thy name and keep it holy!"

When is the name of God taken in vain?

The name of God is taken in vain: (1) if holy names are uttered lightly or in anger; (2) if God is blasphemed or religion ridiculed; (3) if a false oath or an unnecessary oath is taken, or if a sworn promise is not kept; (4) if a vow is broken.

PSALM CXLVIII

Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise ye him in the high places.
Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, O sun and moon: praise ye him, all ye stars and light.
Praise him, ye heaven of heavens: and let all the waters that are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord.
For he spoke, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created.
He hath established them for ever, and for ages of ages: he hath made a decree, and it shall not pass away.
Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all ye deeps.
Fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy winds, which fulfill his word.
Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars:
Beasts and all cattle: serpents and feathered fowls:
Kings of the earth and all people: princes and all judges of the earth:
Young men and maidens: let the old with the younger, praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is exalted.
The praise of him is above heaven and earth: and He hath exalted the horn of his people.
A hymn to all his saints: to the children of Israel, a people approaching to him.
Alleluia.

A Blasphemer

A Protestant soldier, Phillip Schuller, of Verbacz (Hungary) relates the following:

"When we were under heavy fire (1914), a Serbian soldier was standing by my side. He began to curse and blaspheme. Fear came over me when I heard him, and I turned round and said to him: 'Cease cursing and blaspheming, I beg you. Consider the danger we are in.' He answered with a derisive smile and began to curse more vehemently than before. I turned away, for the tears came into my eyes. Another soldier, who had also been blaspheming, saw my emotion and enquired the cause. I told him that I could not endure to hear swearing or any offensive words against God, particularly at such a time. He grew serious and ceased swearing. Presently he said: "You are right, brother. Who else will protect us but God! We must all pray to Him." But the Serbian expressed his hatred of God in a more and more terrible manner. Again I exhorted him not to curse, lest God punish him. His answer was a torrent of blasphemies. The thought of it makes me tremble still.

At the same moment a piece of shrapnel struck him square in the mouth, and his head was completely shattered. The sight terrified me and I thought: 'God punishes wrong-doing.' From that moment I redoubled my prayers."

The soldier who related this incident promised that he would become a Catholic after he returned home (*Stimmen aus Bosnien,* July, 1915).

CHAPTER VIII

The Third Commandment

1. In the Third Commandment God requires that we should honour Him in a special way, namely, by devoting one day of each week to His particular service.

God decreed this law when He created the world. He created the world in six days (six periods of time or six acts) and rested on the seventh day, and from the beginning He blessed and sanctified this day. Again, on Mount Sinai, God ordered that the seventh day be kept holy, saying: "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works. But on the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work on it, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy beast" (Ex. XX, 8–10). In the Old Testament the seventh day of the week, Saturday, was set aside as the Lord's Day. But the Apostles, in virtue of the power they had received from Jesus Christ, appointed Sunday as the day of the Lord, because He arose from the dead on a Sunday and on a Sunday the Holy Ghost descended and infused life into the Church.

2. God appointed a special day for His service in order that we should not forget to pay Him the honour due to Him, and that we should show Him this honour in public and in common with others. Further, our souls, more or less diverted by the work of the week from their true aim (Heaven), should again be directed heavenward, lest we sink into the abyss of worldliness and lose sight of our eternal goal.

3. The Church has drawn up definite regulations about the

sanctification of the Sunday. She first of all commands us to abstain from servile work. Servile work means such manual labour as is commonly done by servants and day labourers, peasants, artisans, and factory hands. Intellectual work is not forbidden on Sundays. Servile work is forbidden, because it disturbs the holy quiet that should reign on Sunday and those who perform such work are in special need of rest. Servile work is permitted on Sunday when it is urgently necessary, whether for God's service, or for the carrying on of housekeeping, or to prevent great loss to oneself or one's neighbour. If there is any doubt whether certain work is permissible or not, the bishop or the parish priest should be consulted, especially when the work in question has to be done in public.

Overseers and employers sin if they demand unnecessary work from their employees on the Lord's Day.

A still worse desecration of the Sunday is to indulge in unrestrained pleasures, intemperate drinking, or, worse still, acts of vice and crime.

4. To sanctify the Lord's Day it is not sufficient to keep it as a day of rest. We must also assist at Holy Mass. The Church commands us to honour God in a special way on this day; but we cannot honour Him more effectively than by assisting at the Holy *Sacrifice of the Mass*. The Mass is the richest source of grace; at least on Sundays we should refresh our souls at this source. The Church also exhorts us to hear the word of God on this day and to sanctify the day by other pious works, such as assisting at the evening service, reception of the Sacraments, reading pious books, especially when we are prevented by illness from assisting at Mass, and performing works of mercy.

All this applies also to holydays of obligation that fall on week-days.

5. Sanctifying the Sunday is as necessary for our souls as fresh air is for our bodies. For God has not merely called us to

live for this world; He has called us to a higher, supernatural life. It is only by living a supernatural life that we shall attain to everlasting happiness after death. But the supernatural life is fostered chiefly by serving God on Sundays. If we neglect this duty, the supernatural life within us will die and we shall lose eternal life. Therefore let us nourish the supernatural life within us by attending divine services on Sundays. Jesus exhorts us to this when he says: "Not on bread alone doth man live, but on every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." Eternal salvation or eternal damnation depends chiefly on the manner in which we spend our Sundays.

God has promised manifold blessings even in this life to those who sanctify His day; but He threatens with punishment those who desecrate it.

Before undertaking any position or service we should always enquire as to whether we shall be able to keep holy the Sunday.

How should we sanctify the Lord's Day?

On the Lord's Day we should abstain from servile work, assist at Holy Mass, and perform pious works.

When is servile work permitted on Sundays?

Servile work is permitted on Sundays whenever it is urgently necessary.

Everything Depends on God's Blessing

When men had reached a certain stage of civilization, they grew proud and thought they no longer had need of God. They wanted to show how far they had progressed by erecting a monument magnificent beyond all bounds. So they began to build a city and a tower that should reach to heaven. But God overthrew their proud plan. He caused them to speak in different tongues, so that they could no longer understand one another, and had to depart, going different ways. The city which they had begun to build was called Babel, *i. e.*, "chaos" (Gen. XI).

In recent times, a large part of humanity again became proud because of the progress they had made in civilization. Many secrets had been wrested from nature and many discoveries made. People now believed that they could order the world most beauti-

fully without God; they no longer took God into consideration in their laws, morals, art or literature, their newspapers or periodicals. They no longer sanctified the Lord's Day. But with the Christian religion Christian charity also disappeared. The nations no longer understood one another and became filled with mutual envy and hatred. The World War broke out, bringing with it terrible slaughter and destruction. Within individual nations, too, mutual consideration, obedience and all feeling of duty disappeared; idleness, dishonesty, and violence gained the upper hand to an unheard-of extent; order and happiness vanished. And once again God showed that without Him man cannot be happy. "Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. CXXXIV, 1).

All things depend on God's blessing, which we can draw down upon us especially by keeping the Sunday holy.

CHAPTER IX

The Fourth Commandment

CHILDREN AND PARENTS

The first three commandments of God are concerned, first with the worship of God, and secondly, with our own good. The remaining seven are directly concerned with our welfare. In each of these commandments God safeguards some good that is necessary to our happiness. In the Fourth Commandment He protects the peace, order, and happiness of families and larger communities in Church and State.

The Duties of Children

1. God commands first of all that children should honour their parents. The parents deserve respect because they bring up their children as the representatives of God. Therefore their office is holy and in a sense divine. Children should be respectful towards their parents in their demeanour, in speaking of them, and in their thoughts about them. They should not be rude or disobedient towards them, nor speak badly of them; they should not abuse or ridicule them, nor should they despise or belittle them in their thoughts.

2. True respect implies *love.* Therefore, when God requires children to honour their parents, He also requires that they should love them. Next after God, parents merit from their children the greatest love and gratitude, because, after God, they are their children's greatest benefactors and make many and great sacrifices for them. Therefore, children should always

bear a grateful disposition towards their parents, please them by good behaviour, help them at their work, support them in illness, old age or want, and pray for them during their lifetime as well as after death. Dislike and hostile feelings that creep into children's hearts should be fought against by the thought: "God commands that I should love my parents; I wish to love them!" It is also advisable, in such temptations, to pray for one's parents.

3. God enjoins upon parents to bring up their children properly and to maintain order in the family. But parents can only do this if their children obey them. Therefore, God demands *obedience* from children, saying: "Thou shalt honour thy father and mother!" Again, in Holy Scripture God often exhorts children to be obedient: "My son, keep the commandments of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Prov. VI, 20).

Children are in duty bound to obey their parents as long as they are not of age, and afterwards, as long as they dwell in the parental home.

4. He that shows respect and obedience to his parents will, as a rule, be humble and submissive towards God. Therefore, in the Fourth Commandment and elsewhere God has promised His blessing and eternal salvation to the children who honour their parents. But we also read in Holy Scripture: **"Cursed be he that honoureth not his father and mother"** (Deut. XXXVII, 16).

Bible history and daily experience provide many examples (Tobias, Joseph of Egypt, Cham, the sons of Heli, Absalom).

The most beautiful *model for all children* is Jesus Christ. He was obedient to His Heavenly Father "unto death, even to the death of the cross" (Phil. II, 8). And although He was God, He was subject to His human parents.

Wickedness Swiftly Punished

A Bavarian priest relates the following: "A passionate youth had struck his mother in the face. The next morning the wicked fellow was cutting straw in the barn with his brother. By a remarkable dispensation the very hand with which he had struck his mother was cut off by the machine." This occurred in Bavaria in the year 1896 and was related in all the papers at the time. I made use of it as an example when instructing boys in the Fourth Commandment. After the lesson a youth of eighteen years came to me and showed me his right hand, which was bound in plaster of Paris. He too had raised his hand against his mother, and the selfsame hand was soon afterwards broken in an accident.

Duties of Parents

Parents should consider that their children are God's property and not theirs. They must bring them up for the end for which they were created, *i. e.,* to serve God and be happy for ever. Above all they must teach them the fear of God and see that they attend to their prayers and go to church,—not only by word, but also by example. They must protect their children from sin and corruption. They should equip them with the necessary knowledge and training to make a living. They should not be too indulgent in bringing up their children; they must even be strict and administer punishment when necessary. Holy Scripture says: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him, correcteth him betimes" (Prov. XIII, 24). Parents will have to render a strict account of how they have fulfilled these duties. If they have faithfully brought up their children for God and Heaven, they will not only rejoice in their children in this life, but they will receive a glorious reward from God for all eternity. But woe to them if one of their children is lost through their fault!

Since parents have to perform such difficult duties towards

their children and must render so strict an account to God, the children should in turn endeavour to lighten their burden by good conduct. St. Paul says: "Obey your prelates and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief; for this is not expedient for you" (Hebr. XIII, 17).

What is required by the Fourth Commandment?

The Fourth Commandment requires us to show respect, love, and obedience to our parents.

Why do parents deserve respect, love, and obedience from their children?

Parents deserve respect, love, and obedience from their children because they take the place of God towards their children, and because next to God they are their greatest benefactors.

A Heroic Mother

About the year 200 B. C. the Jews came under the rule of the kings of Syria. One of these kings, called Antiochus, wanted to force them to be unfaithful to the law given them by God through Moses and serve the pagan idols. As a sign of their apostasy the Jews were commanded to eat the flesh of swine, which was strictly forbidden by the law of Moses. Among others a mother and her seven sons were brought before Antiochus and commanded to eat of the flesh of swine. When they refused to do this, he had them beaten with scourges. Then the eldest boy said: "We will die rather than transgress the law of God." The King, full of wrath, ordered that the youth's tongue should be cut out, his scalp pulled off, and his fingers and toes amputated, while his brothers and his mother looked on. Then the King had the mutilated youth, who was still breathing, taken to a fire and roasted. Thus one brother after another suffered martyrdom. The mother encouraged and strengthened each one, saying: "The Creator of the world in his mercy will give you life again if you sacrifice yourselves now for the sake of his law." All remained firm. Finally came the turn of the youngest boy. Antiochus promised him that he would make him rich and happy if he would renounce the law of his fathers.

When the youth refused to do this, the King turned to the mother and told her that she should persuade him. She spoke to her son in Hebrew, that the King might not understand: "My child, look up to heaven, and then look at the earth. God has made all from nothing. Then have no fear of this executioner. Show yourself worthy of your brothers. Choose death that we may meet again in eternal life with your brothers." The boy turned to the executioner and cried: "For what do you wait? I will not obey the law of the King, but the law of God; and you, O King, will not escape the hand of God Almighty!" The King had this boy martyred in a more terrible way than all the rest. Finally, the mother also was put to death.

The eternal salvation of her sons was more to this mother than their life and happiness on earth. She had a true heroic mother's love. Many parents have merely a natural love for their children and provide for their temporal success only, neglecting the care of their souls. The children will curse their parents for all eternity because of their foolish love.

A Weak Father

One of the so-called Judges who governed the Israelites before there were Kings was called Heli. He was also a high priest, and a pious man, but his sons, who were priests, desecrated their office. When the Israelites brought their beasts to be sacrificed at the altar, these priests were not content with the part that was due to them, but took what they pleased, and if an objection was made, they took it by force. This made the people very angry. The sons of Heli also behaved disgracefully in other ways. When Heli, now an old man, heard of the wicked doings of his sons, he said to them: "Why do ye these kinds of things? Do not so, my sons. You make the people of the Lord transgress." But his sons paid no heed to his exhortation and Heli could not bring himself to deal with them sternly and punish them as they deserved, although this was his twofold duty, since he was both their father and their superior. God sent a prophet, who said to Heli: "Thus said the Lord: Why have you kicked away my victims, which I commanded to be offered in the temple? And thou hast rather honoured thy sons than me? . . . Whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify; but they that despise me, shall be despised. On one day thy two sons shall die." Later God

said to the prophet Samuel: "Behold, I will raise up against Heli all the things I have spoken concerning his house . . . because he knew that his sons did wickedly and did not chastise them." Soon after there was a war with the Philistines and the Israelites were defeated. They had the Ark of the Covenant brought into the field. The two sons of Heli went with the Ark. But the Israelites suffered yet greater defeat, and the Ark of the Covenant itself fell into the hands of the enemy. The sons of Heli perished. When Heli, now ninety-eight years old, heard the terrible news, he fell from his stool and broke his neck.

Because Heli did not punish his sons when it was necessary, both he and they had to undergo immeasurable, perhaps eternal, suffering. To such as Heli the words of Holy Scripture may be applied: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes" (Prov. XIII. 24).

CHAPTER X

The Fourth Commandment (Continued)

SUBORDINATES AND SUPERIORS—SUBJECTS AND RULERS

The Duties of Subordinates and Subjects

1. By the Fourth Commandment God desires to create an organized social life among men. Therefore He includes in this commandment all those who, in a certain sense, may be called "father," and hence all superiors, foster-parents, and teachers, employers, officials, and such like—spiritual and secular authorities, and requires that we should respect, love, and obey all our superiors and persons in authority as children respect, love, and obey their parents.

2. Those whose duty it is to serve should show a respectful demeanour towards their employers; they should not be rude or forward; but they should be faithful and conscientiously guard their employer's property; they should perform their work industriously and be exact in the daily routine. St. Peter writes: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (1 Peter II, 18). St. Paul admonishes them to "be obedient . . . not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but as to the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. VI, 5–6). By so doing those whose vocation it is to serve others can practise such excellent virtues as love of God, self-restraint, patience, humility, and meekness, and they can reach a high degree of holiness, like St. Zita and St. Notburga.

The young should show respect to the aged on account of their greater experience and wisdom. Holy Scripture says: **"'Rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged man"** (Lev. XIX, 32).

We should be grateful to our benefactors. He who repays kindness by ingratitude is unjust and ignoble, and will be even less grateful to his greatest Benefactor,—the Lord God. Through His Apostle Paul God exhorts us, saying: "Be ye thankful" (Col. III, 15). On the other hand He warns us: "He that rendereth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house" (Prov. XVII, 13). The feeling of gratitude is beautifully expressed in the words, "May God reward you!"

3. *Superiors* have the sacred duty to care for the welfare of those depending on them, spiritual superiors for their eternal welfare, and secular superiors for their temporal well-being. Spiritual superiors are the Pope, bishops, parish priests, and their representatives. Secular authorities are the head of the State, whether he be a hereditary ruler or an elected president, as well as all other authorities and representatives justly and lawfully appointed or elected by the people. St. Paul says: **"Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God"** (Rom. XIII, 1).

Jesus instituted the spiritual authorities when He appointed Peter and the other Apostles as well as their successors. The secular authorities are also instituted by God. For He so created men that, with rare exceptions, they are obliged to live together in communities and states. But communities and states have need of authority to preserve order. Therefore it is God's will that there should be certain persons in authority and that they should be obeyed. Hence we should obey those placed over us, because God wills it and not through fear of punishment.

4. If employers, superiors, or even parents command something that is against the commandments of God, they should

not be obeyed. When the Jewish Sanhedrin forbade the Apostles to preach about Jesus, they answered: **"We ought to obey God rather than men"** (Acts V, 29).

5. Our country, that is, the land or state in which we were born and grew up, is also in a sense our father and mother. Therefore the Fourth Commandment requires that we should love and honour our native country, support it by word and deed, and, if necessary, make sacrifices for it, even the sacrifice of life. He who sacrifices his life for his country in obedience to God's commandment will receive eternal life. For Jesus said: "He that shall lose his life for me shall find it" (Matth. X, 39). Treason to one's country is one of the worst crimes, not only in the eyes of men, but also in the eyes of God.

Duties of Employers and Superiors

1. In a certain sense domestic servants are a part of the family. Therefore masters are bound not only to pay them the wages agreed upon, but also to look after their bodily and spiritual welfare. Especially if the servants are young, their masters must train them to live a religious and moral life. St. Paul exhorts masters to be kind to their servants, adding: "Knowing that the Lord of both of them and you is in heaven; and there is no respect of persons with him" (Eph. VI, 9).

2. It is the duty of superiors to care for the welfare of their subjects,—spiritual superiors for their eternal salvation, and secular superiors for their temporal welfare. They are further bound to protect their subjects from injustice and to concern themselves especially with the poor and oppressed. Secular authorities have not to concern themselves with affairs of religion, but should protect and promote the true religion. For the state and secular authorities should serve God; and religion is necessary also for the temporal welfare of men. Nor can the state make exemptions in the laws and decrees of God; it must conform to the law of God, especially with regard to the

rights and requirements God has placed in man's nature, in the family, and in the social life, the so-called natural rights. Thus no state is justified in interfering with property, marriage, or the right of parents over their children. Today almost everywhere the people themselves, through their representatives, exert great influence over the way in which the state is governed. It is an important matter of conscience for each person who has a voice in electing these representatives, to consider whether the persons desiring to be elected are likely to support and promote religion and the public order.

Besides to parents, to whom do we owe respect, love, and obedience?

Besides to parents, we owe respect, love, and obedience to our superiors and all legitimate authorities.

What are the duties of parents, superiors, and persons in authority?

The duties of parents, superiors, and persons in authority are to provide for the temporal and eternal welfare of their subjects.

Spiritual and Secular Authorities—St. Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius

In purely secular matters priests and bishops are subject to the civil authorities. In matters which are both spiritual and secular it is the Catholic doctrine that both authorities should cooperate. But the Pope, as Vicar of Jesus Christ, should enjoy complete independence and therefore should not be subject to any secular state. Since the Pope has been forcibly deprived of the Papal States (1870), he has to be careful to maintain his independence of the Italian government; for otherwise he would be impeded in his work of directing the Church, and the confidence of the faithful in their common father would be undermined. Therefore the Pope has never accepted the position arising from the seizure of the papal territory. On the contrary, he frequently protests against the unworthy position in which he is placed and

demands that the Holy See should be restored to complete independence.

In spiritual matters even the highest secular authorities have to conform to the Church, as testified by the words of Jesus Christ to His Apostles: "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matth. XVIII, 18). A beautiful example of obedience was given by the Emperor Theodosius, the last ruler of the united Roman Empire.

In the city of Thessalonica, today known as Saloniki, the people had for some trifling reason revolted and cruelly murdered the Emperor's representatives. In the heat of his anger Theodosius ordered the people to be enticed into the circus and massacred without distinction. The order was carried out, and thousands of defenceless people were slain. A cry of horror was raised throughout the world. When soon after the Emperor came to his residence in Milan, St. Ambrose, who was the bishop of that city, imposed upon him a severe public penance, as was customary with great sinners at that time, and forbade him to enter the house of God until he had performed this penance. Knowing the Emperor's temper, the Bishop held himself ready for the worst. But, contrary to expectation, the Emperor humbly submitted to the Bishop's order. In a picture by the famous painter Rubens the Emperor is shown accompanied by armed soldiers, attempting to enter the church, while the Bishop, standing in the doorway, refuses to admit him.

Obedience vs. Liberty

Today many people believe that obedience is an interference with liberty and therefore unworthy of man. They even extend this to the obedience due to God. But these persons are in error. Obedience, on the contrary, leads to liberty. True liberty is not freedom to do what any horse can do, namely, kick up his heels and run away. It is rather to become master of all that is low and ignoble within us. Now there are few things that can help us to do this as effectively as obedience. It is only by obedience to his parents and teachers that the child can overcome his weakness and naughtiness; only by obedience can he become a good and useful member of society. By rendering obedience to our parents and superiors we all practise a virtue that is extremely necessary,

namely, self-control and self-denial. If we resist our desires and moods, and consciously and freely submit to lawful authority, our will is strengthened and we acquire more and more power over all inordinate desires. "He that overcomes himself becomes free from the power that binds all men" (Schiller).

More than anything else the Commandments of God help us to govern our instincts and passions,—hatred and envy, sensuality, greed and so on,—and thus to obtain real and lasting peace. Therefore the Church, in her prayers, says that "to serve God is to rule." But he that will not obey the commandments of God will become the prey of his evil passions and end as the most miserable of slaves.

Even outward freedom can only be gained by being obedient, that is, by obeying lawful authority. Where such obedience is rendered, there order reigns, and each one can live according to his vocation and possess in peace and safety what property he has acquired. But where there is no obedience to authority, public peace departs; one infringes upon the rights of another, each becomes the enemy of each, and finally tyranny and lawlessness reign supreme. Under such conditions there can be no happiness for the oppressed or for the oppressor; for in the background lurk other tyrants ready to push aside the first. We have had sufficient experience of all this in our own time.

Without obedience the admirable works performed by organized society would be impossible. The gigantic ship will only make the voyage successfully when all submit to the will of one. It is similar with the work of a factory, or the march of an army. When each one does as he pleases, the ship founders, the factory fails, the army is defeated as a matter of course. Thus our interior and exterior happiness, our interior and exterior freedom, all depend on obedience and the discipline which it creates.

CHAPTER XI

The Fifth Commandment

1. By the Fifth Commandment God protects our greatest material good—*i. e.*, life.

First of all He forbids *murder,* that is, the premeditated killing of our neighbour, and *manslaughter,* that is, the unpremeditated but voluntary killing of our neighbour. Murder and manslaughter are frightful crimes, for the one who commits either of these crimes deprives his neighbour of his greatest material good, life; it may even be that he is sending him straight to hell. Further, he is violating the image of God and destroying a life destined for God's service. Hence we read in Holy Scripture that murder cries to Heaven for vengeance.

Sometimes the sad necessity arises in which a person must be deprived of his life; and God, the Lord of life, gives the right to do this in certain cases. Thus He gives to the civil authorities the right to impose the *death penalty* on great criminals. He gives every one the right to protect himself against murderers or robbers, and if there is no other way to defend oneself, to kill the assailant. This is called *justifiable self-defence.* God also gives to states the right to protect themselves against, and *wage war* upon, states that threaten them; but we must not injure our enemy more than is necessitated by the defence of our country. Wars of conquest are unjust, and thousandfold murder. But generally speaking, the individual soldier cannot be certain as to the justice or injustice of a war, and therefore must obey when he is called upon to fight for his country.

Since, by the Fifth Commandment, God wishes to protect human life, this Commandment forbids all that is injurious to our neighbour's life,—wounding, abuse, severe treatment or outrage of his person, adulteration of food, uncleanliness in the preparation of food, the selling of tainted food. God forbids especially the ill-treatment of widows and orphans and of the helpless in general. He says: "You shall not hurt a widow or an orphan. If you hurt them, they will cry out to me, and I will hear their cry" (Ex. XXII, 22–23).

God has placed the animals under the domination of man and permits him to slay them for his own good. But to kill animals without necessity, or wantonly to torture them, is a sin against God who made and loves these creatures. Holy Scripture says: "The just regardeth the lives of his beasts; but the bowels of the wicked are cruel" (Prov. XII, 10). The torturing of animals hardens the callous yet more; often torturers of animals have become murderers.

2. God also requires that we should *preserve our own lives;* for He, not we, is the Master of our lives. Therefore we should not risk our lives, unless it be for higher considerations; still less are we allowed to take our own lives. *Suicide* is a grievous crime. He who throws away his life, abandons in a cowardly way the post at which God has placed him, and with this crime on his soul he appears before the judgment seat of God; therefore, he casts himself straight into hell. It is a serious error to think that by taking our own life we escape from trouble; on the contrary, it means facing the most frightful of all troubles, everlasting torment.

In order to deter men from this appalling crime, the Church refuses Christian burial to suicides, unless the person concerned was irresponsible.

3. We should also have due consideration for our *health.* To maintain good health, moderation in eating and drinking helps more than anything else. The temperate person does not

permit himself to be guided by his appetite, but rather by necessity and utility. It is advisable always to eat less than we are inclined to eat and to partake of nothing between meals. Most illnesses are caused by intemperance.

Intemperance in the use of spirituous drinks is particularly harmful. To this cause are ascribed from a quarter to a third of all diseases, one-third of all mental disorders, one-third of all the suicides and three-fourths of all the crimes committed. When young people are tempted to impurity, it happens almost always after they have indulged in strong drink, if not when actually intoxicated. Spirituous drinks can be regarded as harmless only if they are used in moderation. He who wants to be preserved from the misery and slavery of drunkenness, and who also wants to co-operate in saving others from this fate, should make the resolution to abstain completely from liquor. By abstinence thousands can be saved every year from sin and misery and eternal damnation. Furthermore, abstinence benefits the mind and body and, generally speaking, prolongs life.

4. A sin against both one's neighbour's life and one's own is *duelling,* that is, an arranged combat fought with deadly weapons. It is a relic of barbarous times. Honour cannot be re-established in this way. Killing one's opponent is no proof that one is right. Nor is any particular courage shown by fighting a duel. Much more often a duel is caused by the fear, in case of a refusal to fight, of being looked upon as a coward or losing social prestige. But even if honour could be reinstated or courage proved by a duel, the commandment of God, "Thou shalt not kill!" would stand higher. The Church puts under the bann all who take part in a duel, and the civil laws also inflict severe penalties for this crime.

Let us thank God for thus protecting our lives by His fifth Commandment!

What is forbidden by the Fifth Commandment?

The Fifth Commandment forbids all injury to one's own or one's neighbour's life.

How does one sin against the life of one's neighbour?

One sins against the life of one's neighbour by killing him unlawfully or by ill-treating him, by doing him wrong or injuring his health.

How does one sin against one's own life?

One sins against one's own life by taking one's life, by exposing it unnecessarily to danger or by thoughtlessly injuring one's health.

A Saint's Opinion of Intemperance

St. Peter Canisius in his famous Catechism says: "What is more shameful than for man to lower himself beneath the animal, whose nature it is to be temperate, and to become a slave to his stomach, to greed and drunkenness, wasting his means, undermining his health, bringing disease upon himself, and finally destroying his life? For the saying is but too true: 'By surfeiting many have perished: but he that is temperate, shall prolong life' (Ecclus. XXXVII, 34)."

The Demon Alcohol

On the night of October 20th to 21st, 1907, the inhabitants of the village of Alland (Lower Austria) were awakened by the cry, "Fire!" A peasant's house was in flames. As none of those dwelling in the house was to be seen, some neighbours forced their way in. A terrible sight met their gaze. The owner of the house, John X——, a man 42 years of age, lay on the floor dead; beside him lay the bodies of his four children. In the adjoining room his wife was moaning. She was terribly mutilated, the head, nose and lower jaw broken, and one eye destroyed. She had been frightfully ill-used and had lost her senses. She cried out repeatedly: "Let me go! Let me go!" The wretched woman was taken to a hospital in Baden, where she died two days later.

All this misfortune was brought about through overindulgence in alcohol. X——, in an attack of delirium tremens, without being actually drunk, killed his children, attacked his wife with a hammer, knife, and axe, and finally set fire to the house. He was

himself overtaken by a stroke of paralysis. One little son, two years old, who had crept away and hidden from his infuriated father, was saved from the burning house.

This man's grandfather also is said to have set fire to his house when in a drunken state. His father was so badly hurt in a drunken brawl that he died from the effects. X—— himself drank brandy while still very young. During his school years he was insubordinate to his parents, lazy, and quarrelsome. When a youth he lived an immoral life and was a much-feared brawler. After he married, he drank more than ever and made life a hell for his wife and children. Abuse, quarrelling, and ill-treatment were the order of the day. At last he contracted delirium tremens and, with his whole family, met the wretched end we have just described.

CHAPTER XII

The Fifth Commandment Regarded in a Spiritual Sense

1. God considers the disposition of our hearts even more than our exterior acts. Therefore, when He forbids murder and manslaughter, He forbids also the feelings that inspire murder and manslaughter, *i. e.*, anger, envy, and hatred. He also forbids words which express this disposition, that is, abuse and cursing.

About *hatred* Holy Scripture says: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John III, 1), that is, he has the disposition of a murderer. We may hate and abhor the faults and sins of our neighbour, but our neighbour himself we must love. We should fight against the beginning of hatred, that is, aversion, by considering: "My neighbour is a child of God; for God's sake I will love him as my brother."

He that has abused or insulted his neighbour should seek his pardon by word or deed; in the eyes of God this is more important than sacrifices or other good works. The Saviour tells us this in the words: "If therefore thou offer thy gift at the altar, and thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother: and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift" (Matth. V, 23–24).

2. By the Fifth Commandment God also protects the *life of the soul.* The natural life of the soul cannot be taken, because the soul is immortal; but it is possible to take the supernatural life of the soul, that is, sanctifying grace and the right to Heaven. This life of the soul is taken, or at least injured, if we

give scandal to our neighbour, that is, if we voluntarily cause him to sin. This occurs not only through deliberately leading our neighbour into sin, but also by praising any evil our neighbour does or intends to do, by bad example, bad books, by immodest pictures, conversation or dress, or in any other way.

He that gives scandal may be guilty of his neighbour's eternal damnation; he may even be guilty of the damnation of many; for one that is led astray usually leads others astray. Scandal given through books or pictures often affects thousands of people. St. Paul exhorts us to "destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Rom. XIV, 15). The scandal-giver co-operates with the devil and is "a murderer from the beginning" (John VIII, 44). Hence Jesus says: **"He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believes in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals"** (Matth. XVIII, 6–7).

Let him that has given scandal take all possible means to undo his evil work and lead his neighbour back from the wrong path on which he has started him, and thus make some amends for the scandal he has given.

What, besides wicked deeds, does God command by the Fifth Commandment?

By the Fifth Commandment God also forbids anger, envy, hatred, abuse, and cursing.

When do we injure our neighbour in his soul?

We injure our neighbour in his soul when we are guilty of causing him to sin (give scandal).

If the innocence of a child is entrusted to you, oh, cherish it. Do not disturb it by a breath, by the flicker of an eyelash. Do not remove the veil that separates the child from sin and blemish. Do not rob him of the simplicity that delights God and His angels.

Better Die Than Give Scandal

About 200 B. C. the Jewish people came under the rule of the Syrians. King Antiochus wished to exterminate their religion. He forbade them, under pain of death, to observe the law of Moses. An old man of ninety years, called Eleazer, was led to death by the minions of Antiochus because he had refused to eat the flesh of swine. Through Moses God had forbidden the Israelites to eat the flesh of swine. The friends of Eleazer wanted to bring him different meat, if he would but pretend he was eating pork. But Eleazer said: "It is unbecoming to my years to be a hypocrite. The young people might think that old Eleazer had become a pagan. I should then be your seducer and bring down a curse upon my grey head. I will rather die courageously." He was tortured to death. Thus he became a martyr and gained a glorious reward in Heaven.

CHAPTER XIII

The Sixth Commandment

CHASTITY AND IMPURITY

By the Sixth Commandment God protects chastity, purity, and innocence.

1. Chastity consists in controlling the sexual instinct. The following reflections will show us what a great blessing chastity is. Man is made up of two parts, a higher, called the spirit, and a lower, called the body. His entire worth depends on whether the spirit or the body rules him. In a chaste person the spirit rules the body and allows it only what is reasonable and good. By this means man's whole being is directed towards what is high and noble; he approaches God and the angels; he is sensitive to all that is high and noble. Generally this can be seen in a person's exterior; the chaste person possesses a peculiar charm, as it were, a glimpse of Heaven. Chastity also makes the mind and body fresh and healthy; it makes man happy and joyous. Because chastity ennobles man and makes him happy, God loves this virtue exceedingly. Jesus says: **"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"** (Matth. V, 8). Chaste souls are the special favourites of our Divine Saviour. About them it is written that "they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" in Heaven, and sing a canticle which none others can sing (Apoc. XIV, 3, 4).

2. The unchaste person, on the other hand, allows himself to be ruled by that which is low and servile, by the body with its animal lusts. He is drawn to the earth like the beasts. He

takes no pleasure in God or divine things. He loses all sense and understanding of these. Sacred Scripture says: "Wisdom . . . will not dwell in a body subject to sin" (Wisd. I, 4). Therefore the unchaste often lose their faith. Generally speaking, this vice renders men gross, and not seldom gives to the countenance a coarse, brutal expression. Unchastity makes men inhuman and often leads to murder. This vice quickly becomes a habit that is difficult to break, for it makes men abject slaves. It also devastates the body; it occasions disgusting diseases, which often lead to insanity. It robs people of the joy of life and drives many to despair and suicide.

3. Because impurity drags man down so low, it is hated and abhorred by God. The unchaste person outrages God by destroying, as far as possible, God's image within himself. Under the eyes of God and the holy angels, he desecrates his body, which was consecrated as a temple of God in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion, and was destined one day to rise again in glory, transfigured for all eternity. The Holy Bible warns us: "Know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God; and you are not your own?" (1 Cor. VI, 19.) **"If any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are"** (1 Cor. III, 17).

God showed how much He hated this sin when by the Flood He destroyed the human race, which was sunk in the depths of impurity; and again when He exterminated the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrha with their inhabitants by sending fire from Heaven. God also shows His detestation of impurity by the frightful diseases He sends in punishment for this vice. Whole nations perish through impurity. In the next world, as Holy Scripture says, the unchaste "shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone" (Apoc. XXI, 8).

4. **Sins against purity are immodest actions, looks, words, jokes and songs as well as voluntary thoughts and desires.**

Whatever is done voluntarily out of impure pleasure is a mortal sin. Jesus says: "Whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matth. V, 28). What happens only through want of thought or curiosity usually is not a mortal sin, but may easily lead to mortal sin. What occurs through care for cleanliness or health or any similar cause, or what happens involuntarily, is not a sin, if there is no impure pleasure taken in it.

God warns us against impurity by the feeling of shame. He who is sensitive to this feeling and acts accordingly, is chaste or modest. He who suppresses shame within himself and deadens it, is immodest.

5. Our whole happiness in this life and in the next depends on purity. He that preserves this virtue will almost certainly keep the faith, serve God, and save his soul. Purity is a priceless virtue. Impurity, on the contrary, resembles "a fire that devoureth even to destruction, and rooteth up all things that spring" (Job XXXI, 12), making men unhappy in this life and in the next. Let us carefully guard the great blessing of purity.

St. Agnes, Beloved of God and Creatures

Perfectly pure souls are an honour to humanity and beloved by God. St. Agnes was such a pure soul. She was born in Rome in the time of the Emperor Diocletian. Her parents were distinguished and wealthy. Through her innocence and piety she brought joy to all who knew her. While still in her first youth, she consecrated herself to the Divine Saviour and made a vow to renounce all earthly love. The most distinguished Roman youths sought to woo her because of her great beauty and wealth. The son of the governor of the city, whose name was Symphronius, tried everything to obtain her for his bride. He offered her the most costly adornments, but Agnes refused them all, saying:

"Leave me alone, thou food for worms. I am loved by Another One who has given me far more costly gifts. He is infinitely nobler than thou." The youth's father, Symphronius, inquiring to whom Agnes gave her love, discovered that she was a Christian. He had her brought before him and tried to alienate her from the Christian religion, at first by promises and flattery, then by threats. But Agnes remained firm. Then Symphronius ordered that logs should be piled up and lighted, and Agnes thrown into the flames. But the flames did not hurt her. In the midst of the fire Agnes prayed with outstretched arms and the fire became extinguished. Symphronius now gave orders that she should be put to death by the sword. Filled with holy joy, she knelt down and bowed her head to receive the deadly blow. Fear and silence reigned among the crowd. All were astonished at the courage of the thirteen-year-old child; many were weeping. Even the executioner trembled and did not trust himself to strike. But Agnes said: "Why do you hesitate? For what do you wait? Kill this body, which might still be pleasing to eyes I do not wish to please." Then she received the death blow, on January 21st.

Her parents buried her on an estate which they possessed near Rome. For many nights they watched by her grave, weeping. One night Agnes appeared to them in the midst of a host of virgins in radiant garments. She had beside her a beautiful white lamb and comforted her parents, saying: "Do not grieve for me, but rather rejoice; for I have received a glorious throne in Heaven and am now with Him whom I loved above all else when I was on earth." Hearing these words, her parents ceased to mourn, and rejoiced.

Since her death St. Agnes has been highly venerated by the Church; her feast is celebrated on the 21st of January.

How a Christian Negro Woman Died to Preserve Her Chastity

Father Robert, of the Society of the White Fathers, writes from Kirando in the Apostolic Vicariate of Tanganyika in Central Africa:

"One of our Christian women, Anna Mizingo, had lost her husband. According to the law of the country, she, with her goods, became the property of the nearest relative of her husband, Mnyakumbi. But the latter, a pagan, already had a wife. When he came to fetch Anna Mizingo, she courageously said to him: 'Mnyakumbi, I know I am your property; but as I am

a Christian, I may not become your wife. I am over forty years of age; let me live in peace with my children.' 'Christian or not, young or old, you are my property, and whether you are willing or not, you must become my wife,' was the harsh answer. For three months Mnyakumbi importuned the poor woman unceasingly, at one time with fair promises, at another with threats. It was all in vain. One morning he said to his neighbour: 'I am going to slay someone today,' and went to the village where Anna lived. 'Today you must decide between life and death,' he said to her. 'I am resolved upon that. Yes or no? Will you be my wife?' 'Never!' was the reply. A knife gleamed, and a moment later the woman sank to the ground and died. Thus a poor negro woman became a martyr rather than break God's commandment.

CHAPTER XIV

The Sixth Commandment (Continued)

HOW CHASTITY IS PRESERVED

Through the sin of Adam human nature was weakened and the will received an inclination towards evil, especially towards impurity. Therefore, great care is necessary for the preservation of chastity.

A. Above all we must avoid all occasions of impurity, in particular:

1. Undue *curiosity.* Impurity enters the soul most easily through the eyes. Therefore we must guard against looking at anything that might excite us to impurity, *e. g.,* immodest pictures or statues. Nor should persons of the opposite sex be looked at covetously.

2. *Reading immoral books* and periodicals, that is, such as excite the passions. Novels in particular often contain dangerous moral poison. Many of our daily newspapers are equally dangerous and demoralizing.

3. *Immodesty in dress.* Dress is immodest when, as frequently happens at the present day, the body or the figure is not sufficiently covered. We should not desire to attract attention by our clothing. Vanity and impurity go hand in hand.

4. *Too free intercourse with persons of the opposite sex* and *bad company.* To the former belong love affairs between people who have not yet reached a marriageable age, or who cannot or do not intend to marry each other. Acquaintanceship with a view to marriage should only be made at a mature age and

only with the parents' knowledge and consent. Premature or secret love affairs have caused innumerable people to be unhappy for time and eternity. Even persons engaged to be married should avoid being alone with each other. At certain games also, *e. g.,* forfeits, and in automobiling and hiking, there is too much free intercourse. Girls should be extremely reserved in their demeanour towards men, and permit no sort of unbecoming familiarity; if necessary, they should call for help.

5. *Improper dances, plays and theatrical performances.* Improper dances are unfortunately all too common. We need mention only the fox-trot, tango, one-step, shimmy. To take part in these easily becomes a mortal sin. Few dances nowadays are free from danger. Hence the greatest caution and reserve are necessary in regard to dancing. Girls should never go to a dance without a chaperon. Theatrical performances of the present day are for the most part improper and tend to arouse the passions. This is particularly true with regard to the moving picture shows, which, moreover, often have a brutalizing effect and injure the eyes and nerves, especially of children.

6. *Sloth, self-indulgence,* intemperance in eating and drinking, especially over-indulgence in intoxicating liquor, are also sources of impurity. Hard work is the best antidote.

He that will not avoid the dangers enumerated above will surely fall into the sin of impurity. "He that loveth danger shall perish therein," says Holy Scripture (Ecclus. III, 27). Therefore it is a sin to court these dangers.

B. Further means must be used in order to preserve holy chastity.

1. Holy Scripture says: "As I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, . . . I went to the Lord, and besought Him" (Wisd. VIII, 21). Hence we must *pray* often and earnestly to God for help in preserving chastity. But not only prayer, but also meditation and all that raises our souls above the material and sensual and draws us to the spiritual and

heavenly,—all these are means of preserving chastity. Therefore, let us cultivate the spiritual life. The reading of good books is a great help. But most of all the soul is elevated by frequent communion. Frequent worthy communion is the surest means of keeping the soul in a state of purity. A childlike devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is another effective means of preserving purity. Let us keep her constantly before our minds as our model. Let us daily ask her intercession, using some such prayer as the following: "O my Mother, my Mistress! Remember, I am thine and defend me, thy Child!"

2. In *temptation,* that is, as soon as we notice impure thoughts stirring within us, we must at once occupy our minds with other matters, by doing some work, for example. If the temptation becomes stronger, we must pray, particularly by ejaculations, such as: "Jesus, my God, I love Thee above all!" "I will rather die than sin!" "My Jesus, mercy!" "Holy Mary, Mother of God, keep me from sin!" "O my Mother, my Mistress!" and so on. Let us also consider when in temptation: "God sees me! He knows every thought of my soul. If I consent to sin, He may let me die on the spot and cast me into hell." "I must die; I know not when, I know not where, I know not how. But I do know that if I die in mortal sin, I shall be lost forever."

3. It requires struggles, sometimes hard struggles, to keep the gift of chastity. You must not turn back like a coward, but fight courageously. Jesus looks down on you from Heaven. He will reward your good fight with a glorious prize. If you are wounded in the struggle, or if you should fall, rise up at once, make an act of contrition and resume the fight. Sacred Scripture says: "Oh, how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory: for the memory thereof is immortal: because it is known both with God and with men . . . it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts" (Wisd. IV,

1–2). The conflict is of short duration, the prize of victory is everlasting. Win it with God's help!

What must we do to preserve chastity?

To preserve chastity we must: (1) carefully avoid all dangers to chastity; (2) pray often, frequent the sacraments, and honour our Lady; (3) in temptation promptly avert the mind and have recourse to prayer.

How St. Aloysius Guarded against Impurity

One of the most beautiful examples of perfect purity and innocence is St. Aloysius. He took as his model the Blessed Virgin Mary. In his early youth he made a vow of perfect virginity in front of her altar. In return, Our Lady obtained for him the grace never to suffer the slightest temptation against the virtue of purity. Yet St. Aloysius not only used those means of preserving chastity that are prescribed for all Christians, but went much farther in safeguarding this virtue. In the streets or in company he kept his eyes cast down. As far as possible he avoided the society of persons of the opposite sex. Once his mother sent one of her maids with a message to his room. Aloysius went to the door, listened to the message, and gave his answer without allowing the girl to enter. Another time a game of forfeits was being played in the paternal castle. Aloysius joined in the game because he could not easily refuse. He was called upon to kiss a girl's shadow on the wall. He became very red; he left the room and never again took part in the game. In the 16th century dancing was very popular. St. Aloysius's uncle once gave an entertainment in his nephew's honour. Aloysius came very reluctantly and only on condition that he should not be required to dance. He entered the hall where a large number of nobles, men and women, were assembled. Scarcely had he sat down when a lady came up to him and invited him to dance. Aloysius stood up and, without saying a word, left the hall. He avoided the theatre as well as the dance-hall. His modest, collected demeanour was such that rarely anyone used a wanton expression in his presence. Once, when Aloysius was in the company of several noble youths of his own age, a gentleman of seventy began to tell improper jokes in their presence. Aloysius turned round and said

to him very determinedly: "Are you not ashamed, at your age and with your rank, to speak like that before young people? Do you not know that evil communications corrupt good morals?" With these words he left the company.

He kept his body under the strictest discipline. While still living in the world, he fasted on bread and water Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays and scourged himself three times a week; later he did this every day, until the blood began to flow. He was accustomed to sleep on a hard bed. But when he entered the Society of Jesus, his superiors forbade him these extraordinary austerities because of his delicate health, only permitting him the mortifications prescribed by the rules of the Order.

This youth of angelic purity is a model for all young persons. They are not so free from internal danger as he was, and yet they thoughtlessly plunge into the dangers that threaten from without. Within the fire blazes, and yet they heedlessly apply fuel. Can the fire fail to spread and devastate the body and soul, destroying happiness, both temporal and eternal? Have the courage to deny yourself and to resist temptation like St. Aloysius; fight like him, and, supported by grace, you will be victorious.

Hail Mary, Pearl of Grace,
Pure flower of Adam's race,
And vessel rare of God's election;
Unstained as virgin snow,
Serene as sunset glow,
We sinners crave thy sure protection.

Thou Queen of high estate,
Conceived immaculate,
To form incarnate Love, pure dwelling;
The Spirit found His rest
Within thy sinless breast,
And thence flow joys beyond all telling.

A fairer, purer Eve,
Didst thou her fall retrieve,
For man's debt giving God in payment:
Thy spotless feet are pressed
Upon the serpent's crest,
God's stars thy crown, His sun thy raiment.

Through His dear blood who died,
By sinners crucified,
Art thou preserved, and we forgiven,
Help us to conquer sin,
That we may enter in,
Through thee, the Golden Gate of Heaven.
(Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B.).

CHAPTER XV

The Seventh Commandment

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

1. By the Seventh Commandment God protects property. Everyone should be able to acquire property and possess in peace what he has honestly acquired. Property must be secure for the sake of public order and peace. What confusion and contentions would arise if one person might take from another whatever he pleased. Property secures a certain freedom and independence for the individual. It makes him free to choose his vocation and prepare himself for it. By owning property the individual is enabled to undertake various works and to improve his profession or business; the business man can try new experiments; the landowner can make the earth more productive. This freedom and independence makes a man's work precious and valuable. Property enables us to provide for the future, for old age. It enables parents to provide for their children, to leave them an inheritance, and by industry and economy to make provision for them. It unites parents and children by a strong bond and promotes love and happiness in the family. Having property in common keeps the family together and maintains mutual affection among its members. Finally the strongest stimulus to work and industry is the fact that by these means one can acquire property and be prosperous.

There are many who consider that all property, such as land, houses, factories, machines, tools, in general all that by means

of which we can acquire property, should belong to the State; that no one should work for himself, but that all should work for the State, and that the State should distribute the products of the common labor to each in proportion to his wants. Thus, it is believed, general equality would reign. But if this were the case, no one could make progress by his work and industry; all the pleasure taken in work would disappear, and a sufficiency of the necessities of life and other goods would no longer be produced. The consequence would be general poverty. Further, nobody would want to undertake the harder or more disagreeable tasks necessary for the upkeep of society; the State would have to allot these tasks and make them compulsory; and with that all freedom would disappear. This would lead to general discontent and constant insurrections.

Thus God has in view only what is best for us when He protects property by the Seventh Commandment.

2. By the Seventh Commandment God forbids *theft*, that is, taking secretly what belongs to others, and every practice that resembles theft, *e. g.*, robbery, that is, taking by force what belongs to another, and usury, taking advantage of a neighbour's necessity to exploit him. Usurers take advantage of scarcity of food to demand excessive prices, arbitrarily raise the prices, especially by buying up food and withholding it from circulation, demand excessive interest on loans, and force poor tradesmen to sell their wares at an inadequate price. Usury is a particularly grievous and detestable sin, because the usurer exploits the distress of others instead of coming to their help. The words of the Lord to the prophet Amos (VIII, 4, 7) apply to usurers: "Hear this, you that crush the poor, and make the needy of the land to fail. . . . The Lord hath sworn . . . : Surely I will never forget all their works." Fraud is as bad as theft. He is guilty of fraud who by falsehood or cunning cheats his neighbour; for example, by false measure or weight, passing counterfeit money, adulterating goods, remaining silent

about some defect that exists in a commodity. It is also a form of theft to retain anything belonging to another that has been borrowed or found. In particular we must be governed by the law of the land with regard to articles found.

Similar to theft is the intentional, mischievous, or negligent damaging of the property of another, for example, furniture, dwellings, railway carriages, fields, gardens, meadows, forests. Those also sin against the Seventh Commandment who, by word or act, help others to steal or commit sins resembling theft; for example, by receiving, concealing, or buying stolen goods. Also those who do not prevent stealing or cheating, though they are in duty bound to do so.

3. Unfortunately sins against property are very common because many imagine they can become happy by appropriating money or goods. But the thief, the usurer or the cheat has not a good conscience, which is the first essential of happiness. He cannot respect himself, he fears death that will take everything away from him, he dreads the judgment of God and eternal damnation. He cannot be truly happy, however rich he may be. But the honest, God-fearing man can look anyone in the face; he can die peacefully and go before the judgment seat of God without qualms; endless riches await him in eternity. Hence the words of Holy Scripture (Prov. XVI, 8): **"Better is a little with justice than great revenues with iniquity."**

He that wishes to remain honest must be honest even in little things. A delicate sense of honesty is injured by the smallest violation of the Seventh Commandment. Young men are easily led into dishonesty by gambling, women by love of finery.

What are the sins against the property of others?

The sins against the property of others are: (1) theft and robbery; (2) usury or cheating; (3) keeping what belongs to another; (4) injury to the property of others.

Judas had the management of the modest sum owned by

Jesus and the Apostles, and he defrauded them of some of this money. Through this he became so unscrupulous that in the end he delivered up his Lord and Master to His enemies for thirty pieces of silver. Let us guard against the slightest act of dishonesty, lest we also should be ready to betray our Saviour through love of pelf, that is, commit mortal sins against the Seventh Commandment and thus drive Him out of our hearts.

The Honest Tyrolese

Father Adolph Kolping (d. 1865 in Cologne), the famous founder of the Catholic "Gesellenvereine" (journeymen's unions) once made a walking tour through Tyrol. One evening he went into a lonely inn. Soon after a woman who was on her way to Bavaria to sell objects carved in wood, entered, drank a glass of wine and, when she had paid for it, gave the hostess a further sum of money, saying: "This is to settle the account of the stranger who took a meal here a few hours ago." The money was accepted as a matter of course, and the woman went on her way. Kolping asked the hostess what was the meaning of this, and received the following explanation: On the morning of that same day a Tyrolian traveller had wanted to pay his bill with Austrian money. The hostess could not change this money and the traveller said in a couple of hours he would reach the next town, where he would have it changed and give the sum he owed to some person he met on the road to deliver it to the hostess. The first person he met was the woman with the wood carvings. He gave her the money and she discharged the debt for him. Kolping asked whether the hostess had known the traveller and learned that neither of the three parties concerned had ever met before. Kolping was amazed that people who were total strangers should place such trust in one another. But the hostess did not understand his surprise and said: "Why are we Christians then?" What honesty must have reigned in Tyrol when each one could depend on the other,—the hostess on the traveller, the traveller on the dealer, although they were all strangers to one another! How beautiful it is to find such honesty and how happy the world would be if it were found everywhere!

An Honest Official

Joseph Antony von Pilat, a government official who had once been a Freemason, but later, through the influence of St. Clement Mary Hofbauer, became a devout Catholic, was secretary to the Austrian Chancellor, Prince Metternich. Every morning on his way to court he used to pass the exchange. One day a stockbroker approached him and asked him to whisper a few words in his ear when passing the following morning. "You can say 'Good Morning'; that will be sufficient. I beg you to do me this favour." At the same time he offered him a considerable sum of money. Pilat refused, because he did not want to have any share in a possible fraud; for he saw that the stockbroker desired to publish as important news what he, as secretary of Prince Metternich, had whispered into his ear and thus make capital out of what he heard. The honest man would not be an accomplice to such deception at any price.

Communist Rule in Hungary

The radical Socialists, also known as "Communists," succeeded in usurping civil authority in several countries at the end of the World War, in Russia and, for a time, in Munich and in Hungary, where they caused frightful chaos and destruction.

In Hungary the Communists were in power for 133 days, from March 21st to August 1st, 1919. During this time not only were all the means of production—lands, factories, etc., and in the cities, dwelling-houses—seized, but no one was secure in his possessions. By day and by night Communist raiders entered houses and took away food and clothes, furniture and objects of art, money and valuables from the terrorized populace. A political officer was appointed over each home, to decide who might live in it and who might not, and to control the food tickets, and above all, the political views of the inhabitants. Everything was at the mercy of this official. Any citizen who was politically suspect or who had in any way made himself disliked to the Communist Party, had particularly disagreeable persons billeted in his house. The dwelling, furniture, hearth, bedding and even clothes and food had to be shared with these unwelcome guests.

In the country the large farms were taken over by the Communists, that is, declared to be common property and placed

under the management of commissioners. These commissioners administered the estates in such a way that even the best farms showed a huge deficit. Agricultural machines were ruined, fittings taken away, sold below cost or stolen. Whole tracts of land remained uncultivated, whereas before the large estates in Hungary had been cultivated by the best methods and managed with great proficiency and not only the cities, but also the country districts had been abundantly supplied with food. The new authorities did not stop here. The government newspaper, *Vörös Ujság,* announced at the beginning of July, 1919, that it was necessary to carry the class war into the villages and to break down the peasant opposition. Measures were adopted to this effect, and the result was famine in the cities.

The industries of Hungary were literally destroyed by Communism. Directly after the Communists had come into power all industries with over 20 employees were "socialized," that is, placed under the control of the government. The workers arbitrarily raised their own wages, dismissed managers and engineers, and as a result industry soon was thrown into chaos. While wages rose enormously, the work done decreased to 1/3rd, and even to 1/10th the amount formerly done. For example, a cigarette maker made only 30 cigarettes in the same time she had formerly made 300. Industrious workers were persecuted or even punished for doing too much. In many cases there was no work done, only meetings held and wages demanded. The inevitable result was that all the larger industrial establishments were ruined.

Worst of all was the management of state affairs. After the downfall of the Communist rule (August, 1919) the new Minister of War, Schnetzer, had to dismiss 1,200 girl clerks and abolish fifteen sections in his department as superfluous. The ministry of public instruction had at most 200 employees before the Communist régime; now there were 3,000. In the "theatre and music department" 162 persons were employed, where formerly four had done the whole work. An average of 150 or 160 officials sat where formerly three or four had worked. For whenever a father or daughter was appointed, the whole family followed, even to the grandfather, if there was one. Most of them did no work and, generally speaking, were not qualified to do the work for which they were appointed. A few worked and gave orders *ad libitum.* As a consequence the greatest disorder reigned.

While the people went cold and hungry, the rulers (almost all

Jews) and their friends grew enormously rich. Bela Kun, the head of the government, escaped over the border, taking with him five millions in money and treasure. Equally large sums were found on the person of another member of the Communist government, Szamuely, and in Odenburg the rest of his booty, consisting of seven coffers of gold and silver and four rolls of Persian carpets, was seized. A short time previously he had forced a noble lady of Budapest to marry him. The Communist Polany, when about to escape to Switzerland, took with him 250 millions in cash; 50 millions more were found in a box in his cupboard. Another official stole the "Portrait of Rembrandt as a Young Man," which originally belonged to Count Julius Andrassy and was worth two and a half millions crowns. When the theft was discovered he took the painting back the following morning under his mackintosh. In the meantime another official, the Jew Corvin, said angrily in the Soviet hall to those who had made the discovery: "I feel like having you shot! What do you mean by spying on a representative of the people?"

Theft and fraud occurred in all the Communist offices. Altogether about three milliards in notes, bonds, and other private property was stolen, part of it being used by the Communist leaders for themselves and their followers, and part for recruiting fresh followers in Hungary and abroad.

The chief means by which the Communists maintained their rule was murder and terror. Criminals were placed at the head of the Public Safety Service and the police. One of the first acts of the "Red" government was to open the prisons and liberate the inmates.

In the capital a certain Czerny, together with the so-called Lenin Gang, had the task of holding the population in check. A former Hungarian minister, Julius Pekan, writes about this from first-hand experience: "The cruelties, atrocities and murders of the Lenin Gang surpasses all that the human mind can imagine. . . . They were mostly Siberian Jews, but every occupation was represented, especially the guild of murderers and burglars" (Huszár, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Hungary," page 151).

In the country districts, Szamuely, a Jew, terrorized the people with another division of the Lenin Gang. Pekan relates of him: "Szamuely was the conquering hero of the revolution. He crushed the primitive and feebly organized counter revolutions by appear-

ing on the spot with a superior force; and soon after corpses hanging in the chief places of the town or district proclaimed that the neighborhood had been honoured by a visit from Szamuely. He travelled in an armoured car, or in a Pullman by a special train, which was called simply the 'Hangman's Train' . . . Whenever this train appeared, citizens, labourers, counter-revolutionaries, and even the moderate Socialists all took to flight; for there was no mercy shown; life or death depended entirely on chance. In Szolnok the commandant of the Death Train had fifty-seven people hanged—officers, citizens, peasants, and children; in Kalosca nineteen, in Kaguvi seven, in Dunapartey sixty-two, in Dönös nine, etc. . . . When Szamuely was dictator for the suppression of the counter-revolution beyond the Danube, he made a journey to Kapuvar with 200 terrorists. These arrived in the village armed with hand grenades. Szamuely halted outside the inn and shouted the order: 'Let the innkeeper come out!' 'Here I am, Sir,' answered the poor man, submissive and terrified. 'Stand under the tree!' Szamuely ordered curtly. He then marched along the village street and had a condemned man placed under each tree. These men were then tied up by the executioners in such a way that they must themselves perforce push away with their feet the stool beneath." (*Ibid.*, pp. 147 sq.)

Another means of maintaining Communist rule was the complete closing up of all channels through which information might reach the population of Hungary. Only Communist papers were allowed to be printed. News from abroad might not be communicated even orally. All books were seized, prayer books and books of religious instruction were burned wherever found. Catechetical instruction was abolished; instead, the children were instructed in "free love" and the "rotten institution of family life" was reviled. Jewish teachers were deliberately sent into Catholic districts. The property of the Church was confiscated and the stipends of the clergy were withheld. A number of priests were cruelly murdered. Members of religious orders, especially the Jesuits, were expelled unless they too would agree to the regulations of the government and no longer regard themselves as ecclesiastical persons.

Such was "freedom and equality" under the Communist flag in Hungary. It was no better in Munich and even worse in Russia.

The Communists (called Bolsheviki) have ruled Russia since 1917. They have appropriated the landed property, the factories, and, in many cases, the dwelling-houses of the people, abolished

free-trade, forbidden religious instruction, robbed the churches, and murdered thousands of people who would not agree with their doings. The following is taken from an account given by an eye-witness in 1920: The peasants took back their land by force; but as the products of their industry were taken from them without adequate compensation, they were unwilling to work, and Russia, which once provided a considerable part of Europe with food, now supplies only one-third of its own needs. In the factories all desire to work has vanished and work is made compulsory. The government has introduced the twelve-hour workday. At the head of each industry is a government commissary, who exacts blind obedience from the workers and is empowered to inflict severe punishment, such as withholding of wages, imprisonment, etc. Further, the labourers as well as all other classes suffer from cold and hunger because the food supply is insufficient. Thus Russian industry is going backward at an appalling rate. Dwellings in Petrograd, for example, are largely uninhabitable, since all wooden partitions were used up for heating and the water supply and sewer system are inadequate, no repairs are made, although the rents are collected by the municipality. The judgment of this eye-witness is summed up in the following words: "There is complete chaos, an utter and unprecedented decadence, a dissolution, spreading all around, of everything that can be called life and work." [1] More detailed knowledge will be obtainable only when the present régime in Russia ceases to exist.

The Socialist State of "New Australia"

The abolition of private property has been brought about here and there without violence by a number of people agreeing to form a commonwealth in which all the means of production should be regarded as "Socialistic," *i. e.,* operated for the benefit of all the people. The most systematic attempt of the kind that has ever been made was that of the Australian journalist, W. Lane. This man convinced the Australian workers that private property was the sole cause of poverty, injustice, and crime, and that employers were exploiters, from whom the workers must be set free. To realize this idea, Lane persuaded a number of Australian workers to emigrate to the Republic of Paraguay, South America, which offered them 450,000 acres of fertile land as a gift. The

[1] W. Nemény, *Petersburg 1920,* Munich, 1921.

emissaries described the country as follows: "We have never seen a more favourably situated land. . . . It has magnificent primeval forests with beautiful open pasture land close by. The virgin forest is luxuriant and the climate is such that the soil yields several harvests each year. A large portion of the forest trees can be utilized with profit, as lumber finds a ready market. . . . The soil of Paraguay is unexcelled for agricultural purposes. It needs no artificial fertilization and yields abundant crops. Railways and waterways pass our door. . . . If the colony would not flourish under such conditions, the fact could be attributed only to sloth on the part of the colonists. Famine is impossible in Paraguay."

The account created enthusiasm among the Australian workers. A number of them formed a company and prepared to emigrate to this Paradise. The following is an extract from the statutes: "The emigrants declare themselves for the common ownership of the land, tools, and trade, and for a democratic government. The production and exchange of goods shall take place according to Socialistic rules. The education of the children shall be the affair of the community. The profits of labour are to be distributed in equal shares among the different members, without regard to sex, age, calling, physical or spiritual abilities. . . . Religion shall be the private affair of each individual (*i. e.*, may not be practiced in public)." The members of the company contributed a large sum of money, and in July, 1893, 241 men, women, and children set sail for the new Utopia. All felt free and equal. Lane offered to peel potatoes with the others in the ship's kitchen. But soon the need for a director was felt. Lane assumed unlimited power and was supported by three sturdy members of the company.

The hours of work in this colony, called "New Australia," were eight per day for all without exception. As the wages were the same for all, all eagerly sought the easier jobs, and the more difficult and disagreeable tasks had to be made compulsory. Since individual industry brought no reward, a general distaste for work soon became prevalent. The land was badly cultivated, the harvest profits were small, and soon there was a lack of food. Valuable wood, such as cedar, mahogany, and teak, was waiting to be cut down and taken to the nearest market; but the work of felling the trees seemed too hard for the associates, and the wealth that could have been obtained from this source was lost, while the

money for the purchase of petroleum, salt, and other goods which could not be produced in the colony, soon came to an end. As a consequence of all this there ensued unrest and quarrelling. These were severely suppressed by Lane, but the discontent became constantly greater, and before a year was up (1893) 83 of the colonists emigrated to Villa Rica. They complained of the insufferable tyranny that reigned in New Australia, of the suspicion with which each member watched the others, of mutual fear and ill-will, of boycotts, continual bickering, and a hundred other vexations; —in a word, they said, "New Australia is a workers' hell."

The 83 members who had emigrated from the colony were supplanted by 190 new members, but the situation did not improve. In 1894 the Secretary of the British Embassy, De Findlay, reported to the Foreign Office in London that "the Socialist emigrants to Paraguay began their experiments under the most favourable circumstances; they received land for nothing and were exempted from paying taxes; they possessed ample capital; the colony enjoyed a good climate. Yet when I visited there, every third man assured me that New Australia was hell on earth. I am firmly convinced that not one of the emigrants would have left the colony if it had been based on an individualistic foundation, *i. e.*, without Socialism, if each emigrant had received a little tract of land as his own property, and if the incessant meetings and passing of resolutions about trifles had been omitted."

Finally Lane had to resign his office. He left New Australia with forty-five companions. Those who remained behind felt greatly relieved. But in place of one dictator, there now was the tyranny of a fickle public opinion. The members of the executive committee were mere puppets. Resolutions were passed one day and suspended the next. The managing committee wasted time in endless debates over trifles, and then had no time left for important matters. Sowing wheat in the forest clearings proved a failure, as, owing to the small amount of work done, no adequate harvest could be obtained. Dairying, which might have become very profitable on account of the great number of cattle owned by the colony, was neglected. The harvest of maize was abundant, but it could not be brought in. The field labourers refused to work more than eight hours, and the other divisions declined to put labourers at their disposal. The corn was beaten down by rain and wind, and there was nothing left to do but to drive the pigs into the fields. Thus, what should have been made into bread was fed to

the pigs—that is, all of it which did not perish. The result was described as follows by Mrs. M. Gilmore in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph:* The supplies in the Socialistic warehouse became scarcer and scarcer, until in the end the women washed without soap, cooked without fat, and mended the worn trousers of their husband's with the remnants of old shirts. There was hardly any more flour. Every object of value was stolen and found its way to Asunción (the capital of Paraguay), where it was sold in order to buy petroleum, beans, and salt. When the poverty became greater, the wedding rings were sold. One day the maize supply came to an end. The supply of salt was exhausted. For weeks the colony had to live on unsalted beans. There was not one well nourished person in the whole community. A house-wife was considered lucky if she obtained one ounce of butter in a month.

Finally, the colonists saw that nothing more could be expected from Socialism, and altered the constitution by common resolution. Each associate received the right to work for himself. Each could select a 60-acre farm for himself and herd his cows in the common pasture.

At once the whole situation changed. Men, women, and children worked in the fields from sunrise to sunset, nay, even by moonlight. Houses sprang up in an incredibly short time; vegetable gardens were planted, and soon cattle were to be seen on the common grazing ground in constantly increasing numbers. Religion was re-introduced and religious services were held by common agreement. Today New Australia is a community of healthy, prosperous, and contented farmers (See the monthly magazine *Zeiten und Völker,* 1919, No. 2).

Hitherto all Socialistic experiments have failed, except when founded on Christian charity and unselfishness, such as the Indian State founded by the Jesuits in Paraguay in 1606. It was an exceedingly prosperous and happy commonwealth, which was unfortunately destroyed in 1768 by the Spaniards, at a time when the enemies of religion were at the helm. By order of the Spanish government the Jesuits were driven out of the country, to the great sorrow of the Indians, who for the most part went back to the woods and resumed their wild life. (See Schmidt, *Der christlichsoziale Staat der Jesuiten in Paraguay,* M. Gladbach, 1913.)

CHAPTER XVI

The Seventh Commandment (Continued)

WHAT IS COMMANDED BY THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

By forbidding us to injure our neighbour's property, God enjoins us to perform certain duties towards our neighbour.

1. He who, by theft or cheating or in any other way, has sinned against the property of his neighbour, must repair the injury he has done, that is, he must give back what he has stolen. This is called making restitution. So long as he does not make restitution for the injury he has done to his neighbour (assuming that he is in a position to do so) a thief continues the injustice and thus sins continually against the Seventh Commandment. But he who has injured his neighbour through no fault of his own, is not bound to make restitution except when he is ordered to do so by the authorities.

Restitution should be made to the owner or to his heirs. If this is not possible, the goods wrongfully obtained may not be retained, but must be used for some charitable purpose.

If a person has not sufficient means to make restitution, he should make it when he can, and by degrees. If, notwithstanding the greatest economy, he cannot do so, then he is excused. He is also excused if the owner remits the debt.

Therefore, those who believe they can increase their property by theft, cheating, usury, or such like practices, make a great mistake. What they gain by such means is not their own, but is wrongfully acquired and must be given back. If they cannot bring themselves to do this, they remain guilty of

sin. Soon enough Death will snatch from them their unjustly acquired goods and, in addition, they will lose their eternal salvation. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matth. XVI, 26.)

2. By the Seventh Commandment God requires employers to pay *a just wage* to labourers, servants, artisans, and to pay them at the right time. "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; he that defraudeth them thereof, is a man of blood. He that taketh away the bread gotten by sweat, is like him that killeth his neighbour. He that sheddeth blood, and he that defraudeth the labourer of his hire, are brothers" (Ecclus. XXXIV, 25–27). On the other hand, all those who are paid for their work, whether labourers or officials, are commanded by God to perform their work honestly. *Strikes* are justified only when they have for their object the enforcing of a just wage for work done, when no agreement is violated, and no acts of violence or injury to the welfare of the people are involved. When labourers or officials take advantage of the distressed condition of the employer, the people, or the State, and thus enforce their unjust demands by a strike, this is usury.

God commands citizens to pay the taxes justly demanded by the State, so that the latter may be able to meet its expenses. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," Jesus says (Matth. XXII, 21).

3. It is God's will that by work and economy we should acquire as much property as we need for ourselves and our families. Yet money or property should never be our ultimate aim, but desired only as a means for the preservation and perfecting of our physical and spiritual life. We are not the absolute owners of that which we have, but stewards, from whom God will one day demand a strict account of how we have used our property. God especially requires that we should promote the welfare of our neighbour by means of our property. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The more we

have, the greater is our obligation towards our neighbour. The abuse of property as well as its excessive accumulation can and ought to be quelled by special laws.

What does God require in the Seventh Commandment?

In the Seventh Commandment God requires that we should give to everyone that which is his due, restore ill-gotten goods and make reparation for any injury we have done to our neighbour.

The Economical Empress

The Empress Augusta, wife of Emperor Francis I of Austria, a widow since 1835, was exceedingly charitable. Her secretary relates that every month she gave about 20,000 gulden to the poor. Often she would wear a mended dress, a worn-out hat or old gloves. One day a new hat was ordered for her at the price of 15 gulden. When it was given to her and she learned the price, she exclaimed: "I just remember a family who have asked me for 15 gulden!" The hat was returned and the 15 gulden were sent to the poor family. Another time a lady of the court said to the Empress: "Your Majesty, this dress is quite worn out." "Please mend it," replied the Empress; "I need the money for the poor." The court confectioner was sent away in order that more money might be saved for the poor. The doctor ordered the Empress to drink mineral water; it agreed well with her, but scarcely did she feel better when she countermanded the order: "It is no longer necessary; and I shall have a little more for my poor." She used often to say: "What I have does not belong to me, but to the poor." Her last words were: "Who will look after my poor charges?" She died in 1875.

How easy it must have been for this empress to render an account to God of how she spent her money! But how will *they* answer who spend large sums on trifles and luxuries and have little or nothing left for pious or charitable purposes?

CHAPTER XVII

The Eighth Commandment

TRUTH AND FIDELITY

To bear false witness is to speak what is untrue in a court of justice. By forbidding us to bear false witness against anyone, God protects the truth as well as our reputation.

1. God desires that we should be truthful, *i. e.,* that we should speak only what is true. Our words and conduct correspond to our inner conviction. Such correspondence means order and harmony. Truthfulness promotes many other virtues, for example, honesty and justice, humility and charity. It is necessary for a well-ordered family and happy community life. Therefore this commandment is given us by God for our own good.

2. Every lie, that is, every false utterance made with full knowledge, as well as hypocrisy or dissimulation, is hateful because it means that a person's exterior conduct contradicts his interior conviction. He that lies, abuses a great gift of God, namely, the faculty of speech. God gave us speech that we might speak the truth. Therefore God hates and abhors lying. Holy Scripture says: "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. XII, 22).

The first liar was the Devil. He lied in order to seduce men and make them unhappy. Thus very often an evil motive is associated with a lie, or one attempts by a lie to conceal some wrong one has done. Therefore lying is infamous. "A lie is a foul blot in a man" (Ecclus. XX, 26).

3. Lying is fraught with evil consequences. The liar loses the confidence of his fellowmen and his own self-respect. Usually he that is not particular about speaking the truth is not particular about the property or the reputation of his neighbour. The one who does not esteem the truth will also have less esteem for the revealed truth and will be less firm in his faith. The liar will even try to deceive himself and will not admit his faults. It may be that he will even want to deceive God by hypocritical protestations of love and repentance and by insincere confessions. Therefore Holy Scripture says: **"The mouth that belieth, killeth the soul"** (Wisd. I, 11). In vain does the liar protest that he injures no one by his lies. For every lie injures him who utters it. Further, every lie injures human society, for the more people lie, the less they can trust one another, and the more insecure all are. All this applies also to jocose and so-called white lies. If white lies were permitted, there would constantly be reasons for lying, and one could never count on one's neighbour speaking the truth.

We need not, however, tell the whole truth to every questioner, and frequently the words, "I do not know" obviously mean, "I do not care to tell you," and contain no lie.

4. Fidelity in fulfilling promises also belongs to truthfulness. If any person has made a promise to another, and the latter has accepted it, then that person is obliged to keep it, unless he has promised something that is sinful, or the circumstances have so altered that the fulfilment of the promise would be useless or even harmful.

5. God is Truth itself. He is perfectly truthful and all truth comes from Him. Hence He loves the truth exceedingly and beholds with delight those who, like Himself, are perfectly truthful. Even men highly esteem a person of whom they can say: "He is a man of his word." He that is truthful and sincere can also esteem himself. He has laid the founda-

tion of a noble character. St. Teresa says of the female sex: "If women can bring themselves to be perfectly sincere, they are capable of the greatest things."

What does God require of us by the Eighth Commandment?

By the Eighth Commandment God requires us to be truthful and to respect our neighbour's honour.

A Martyr to the Truth

In the year 1809, when Austria rose up against the despotism of Napoleon, the Tyrolese made a brave fight for freedom. But they were overcome by superior force and had to conclude an unfavourable peace. Peter Mayr, an innkeeper in Mahr, near Brixen, was a captain of the Tyrolese. He continued to fight even after peace was concluded. Taken prisoner by the French, he was taken to Bozen and condemned to be shot. A noble lady interceded for him with the French general, who agreed to pardon Mayr if he would sign a document declaring he had been unaware that peace had been made. But Peter Mayr would not sign. He said: "I will not purchase my life by a lie!" In spite of the entreaties of his wife, children, and brother he remained firm. On the 20th of February, 1810, he was shot outside the old parish church in Bozen. Today a beautiful monument to the memory of Mayr stands on the spot.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Eighth Commandment (Continued)

OUR NEIGHBOUR'S HONOUR

1. By the Eighth Commandment God also guards the honour of our neighbour. Our honour (or good reputation) consists in others having a good opinion of us and manifesting their esteem by their demeanour towards us. A good reputation is one of the most valuable possessions, because through it we gain respect and influence and are encouraged to do good and live a virtuous life. A bad reputation lowers us in men's esteem and deprives us of the joy of life. Holy Scripture says: "A good name is better than great riches" (Prov. XXII, 1).

2. By saying, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," God forbids first of all injury to the honour of our neighbour in a court of justice, and then in general any injury to his honour. Such injury is done by calumniating any person, that is, speaking evil of him that is not true, or by making known his secret faults without necessity (destroying his reputation). We may reveal the faults of our neighbour only if it is necessary for his good, or as a warning to others. If our neighbour's faults are already known, it is against charity to amuse ourselves by discussing them. It is also contrary to charity needlessly to repeat to our neighbour anything bad that others may have said about him (backbiting), for in this way quarrels and enmity are caused. Let us never listen to those who slander their neighbour. Let us rather act in accordance with the Saviour's exhortation: "Do unto others as you would that others should do to you."

All so-called sins of the tongue are inspired by envy, hatred, pride, and love of scandal. Sacred Scripture exhorts us to be reserved in speech, for **"in the multitude of words there shall not want sin"** (Prov. X, 19).

He that has calumniated his neighbour must retract what he has said, unless it has not been believed or is forgotten; he must see to it that all those who have heard the calumny shall know it has been retracted; he must also make restitution for all the injury done to his neighbour through the calumny. The duty of retracting calumny is thus often a very heavy burden. Let us not take the risk of having to take up this burden; let us respect our neighbour's honour. Further, if we have related anything bad of our neighbour through a mistake, we should put it right. If we have revealed failings of our neighbour without necessity, we must try to make restitution as far as possible, by making excuses for him and emphasizing his good qualities.

3. It is also an injustice to think badly of our neighbour as long as we have no sufficient reason for so doing. We should not presume anything bad of our neighbour without sufficient reason (false suspicion), still less should we judge him to be wicked (rash judgment): **"Judge not, that you may not be judged"** (Luke VI, 37). We should always endeavour to put a good construction on our neighbour's conduct, or at least try to excuse it. "Charity thinketh no evil," writes St. Paul (1 Cor. XIII, 5). Of course, we should trust no one whom we do not know to be reliable.

4. Because honour is a great good, we should also defend our own honour. But we must regard our honour in the eyes of God and in the light of our own conscience as far higher than our honour in the eyes of man, so that God may be satisfied with us and our conscience be at rest. Then, sooner or later, we shall receive respect from men also.

How do we sin against the honour of our neighbour?

We sin against the honour of our neighbour by (1) attributing to him faults which he does not possess (calumny); (2) revealing hidden faults of his (detraction) without necessity; (3) thinking evil of him without sufficient reason.

What must he do who has calumniated his neighbour?

He who has calumniated his neighbour must retract the calumny and make adequate restitution.

The Calumniated Jesuits

The Catholic Church is calumniated incessantly. Her enemies want to deprive her of the confidence of the faithful and ruin her. Within the Church the Pope and the bishops are most calumniated because they are the foundation, and the priests and religious orders because they are the pillars of the Church. Again, among the religious orders none is so much calumniated as the Society of Jesus, because it renders the greatest services to the Church through the high culture and the zeal of its members. The most absurd stories about Jesuits are related in newspapers, novels and even in works which profess to be scientific; and these fables are believed by hundreds of thousands of people.

The Jesuits are often accused, for example, of upholding the principle that "The end justifies the means," in the sense that a good end makes a bad means good, and that a pious purpose justifies lying, stealing, and murdering. But the whole history of the Order and the numerous books published by its members prove that the Society of Jesus has always upheld the principle that the end, however good it may be, never justifies the use of bad means.

Again it is said of the Jesuits that, according to their rule, the superiors may command subjects to commit mortal sins or crimes. As a matter of fact the rule of the Society plainly states that superiors may oblige subjects to obey "under pain of sin," that is, in such manner that the subjects commit a sin if they do not obey. The rule is drawn up in Latin, and the Latin expression for "under pain of sin" was wrongly translated by the enemies of the Jesuits.

It is alleged that the Empress Maria Teresia once made a general confession to a Jesuit Father, that the confessor betrayed her confession, which thus became known to the King of Spain;

that the King sent the Empress a copy of her confession in order to convince her of the treachery of the Jesuits and gain her consent to suppress the Order. But when Maria Teresia agreed to the suppression of the Society of Jesus in Austria, she only yielded to the continual urging of foreign powers and her own ministers (who were enemies of the Church); moreover, it was with the greatest reluctance that she gave her consent. She herself wrote: "I am utterly miserable and in despair about the treatment of the Jesuits. All my life I have liked and esteemed them, and have never known their conduct to be anything but edifying." The story of the revealed confession was a pure invention.

In 1900 a Viennese newspaper published the following silly story: "Jesuit envoys are travelling through Galicia, selling little pictures of the saints to the starving population—to be eaten! Whoever swallows one of these pictures will remain free from hunger and disease. Not only their physical well-being, but also their eternal welfare, will be protected in this way. The more pictures of the saints one has eaten, the surer he will be of the Kingdom of Heaven." In reality an abuse of this kind was practised here and there in Galicia, but against the express command of the Church. The Jesuits especially fought against this superstition.

A great many such lies against the Jesuits have been collected, and refuted by Fr. Duhr, S. J., in his book *Jesuitenfabeln.* No doubt the Jesuits when they hear such stories comfort themselves by the words of the Saviour: "Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven" (Matth. V, 11–12).

How a Saint Made Restitution for Injury Done to a Person's Reputation and Property

When St. Ignatius returned home from Paris, where he had studied philosophy and theology for seven years, he zealously preached the Word of God, although he was not yet a priest. A large congregation attended his sermons. He began his first sermon by announcing that a special reason for his returning home was the desire to make atonement for the bad example he had given in his early years, by helping others to lead a better life, and especially to make restitution to one whom he had injured. He there and then pointed to one of those present, called him by

name and said: "This innocent man was unjustly condemned to imprisonment and a fine for stealing fruit from a garden. The guilty persons were myself and some other giddy young fellows. I now desire to proclaim this man's innocence to all. To atone for the wrong I have done him, I hand over to him, partly as a debt and partly as a gift, the two acres that are left of my property. I call upon you all here present to witness this act of restitution."

CHAPTER XIX

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

1. In the Ninth and Tenth Commandments God shows us that it is not enough to observe His precepts outwardly, but we must also conform to them in our thoughts and desires. Our whole worth in the eyes of God depends on the disposition of our hearts. "Man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart" (1 Kings, XVI, 7). Again, all exterior acts of men proceed from within. The Saviour says: "From the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies" (Matth. XV, 19).

2. By the Ninth Commandment God forbids unchaste desires, that is, the desire to see or hear anything immodest, in order to take pleasure therein, or the desire to act immodestly. He also forbids all impure thoughts, that is, imagining any impure action and taking pleasure in it. Impure thoughts and desires are also forbidden by the Sixth Commandment. But God has added a special commandment because these thoughts and desires are particularly dangerous and, if they are not resisted, will soon take hold of our entire being and produce evil actions. Impure thoughts and desires which come involuntarily and to which we do not consent, are not in themselves a sin; but it is very important that we should turn away from them the moment we become conscious of them, and call upon God for help if the temptation is strong. If we fight thus against evil, God will be pleased and will protect us and prepare a most glorious reward for us.

3. While in the Seventh Commandment God forbids us to

take our neighbour's property, in the Tenth He forbids us even to covet that property. At the same time He exhorts us not to be dissatisfied if others possess more than we. God cares lovingly for those who serve Him. Let us do our part and leave the rest to Him. Wealth does not make men happy; it is perishable, and our hearts were made for something higher and better. Wealth endangers the soul because it easily leads to pride, hardness of heart and forgetfulness of God. Jesus says (Matth. V, 3): "Blessed are the poor in spirit," *i. e.,* those who are content with their poverty, but also those who, while blessed with wealth, do not cling to it, but employ it in doing good works. St. Paul exhorts us: "Having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content. For they that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils" (1 Tim. VI, 8–10).

4. God has given us the Ninth and Tenth Commandments also for our good. Through the Ninth He secures for us a pure heart, through the Tenth, contentment and purity, and contentment brings happiness.

God has given us all the Commandments for our good. Yet in His exceeding generosity He wants to reward us if we keep His precepts. For our fidelity He has promised us His protection and blessing in this life and unutterable happiness for all eternity. He says: "I am the Lord thy God . . . showing mercy unto thousands that love me, and keep my commandments" (Ex. XX, 5, 6). "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matth. XIX, 17).

A Princess Who Was "Poor in Spirit"

St. Elizabeth, the daughter of a Hungarian king, was married to the Landgrave Lewis of Thuringia. She resided in the magnificent Wartburg castle near Eisenach. Her large revenues were to her but a means to do good. It gave her great joy to visit the poor and

supply them with food and clothing which she had made herself. She had a house for the poor built on the side of the hill on which the castle stood; here she visited them every day and brought them food and drink. She founded a hospital in Eisenach and frequently waited on the patients herself. She also established an orphanage and was a true mother to the children who were brought there.

At first her dress used to be in keeping with her rank. Once on a great feast day she entered the Church at Eisenach in festive attire. She knelt down and, looking at a Crucifix, meditated on our Saviour's nakedness and suffering. Then the idea came to her: "There your God hangs on the cross, poor and naked, and you, an unprofitable creature, are arrayed in costly garments. His head is crowned with thorns, and yours is adorned with a golden crown!" Then and there she resolved to lay aside all ornaments and to appear elegantly dressed only when her spouse demanded it, or when she had to appear in public as Landgravine. She was very happy living in her simplicity and continued to do much good.

But God visited her with severe trials. Her husband died on a Crusade and her relatives robbed her of all her property. She was forced to leave her castle as a beggar and went from house to house seeking shelter; but the people of Eisenach, fearing the vengeance of those in possession of her property, turned her away. Finally an innkeeper took pity on her and offered her a stable that was little more than a ruin. Directly after she had entered this miserable abode, a little bell began to ring in a Franciscan monastery nearby. It was the midnight summons to prayer. Elizabeth entered the church and asked the Brothers to sing a "Te Deum." She herself knelt down near the altar and thanked Jesus that she was now quite as poor as He Himself had been in the stable at Bethlehem. She was happy because now no material interests could come between her and God. Her children were taken care of by some good people, she herself earned her living by spinning, and she denied herself in food that she might still be able to give to the poor, however little.

Soon she had an opportunity of recovering her position in the world. It is said that the Emperor Frederick II desired to marry her. She wanted to belong to God alone and refused his offer. But she received back her property. She had a cottage built for herself in Marburg (Hessen) and spent all the rest of her money in good works. She built a hospital in Marburg and gave abun-

dantly to the poor who came to her from far and near. She continued to earn her living by spinning. Her father, King Andrew of Hungary, invited her to return to his court. But Elizabeth replied that her life of poverty was dearer to her than her father's kingdom.

Her greatest joy was prayer, in which she received most wonderful consolations from God. She often wept for sheer joy. At last the Saviour appeared and revealed to her that He was about to take her to Himself and to reward her for all the sacrifices she had made. Elizabeth was overjoyed. She went to her sick and blessed them for the last time. What she still had left she distributed among the poor. A short time after she became ill, made her last confession, and devoutly received Holy Communion at a Holy Mass said in her room. After receiving Extreme Unction she sang softly and with exceeding sweetness. The nearer death came, the happier she grew. Finally she cried out: "O holy Mother Mary, come to my aid! The time is near when Almighty God calls His friend. The bridegroom is coming to meet the bride." She then bowed her head and died as gently as an innocent child drops into slumber. This was in the year 1231, and she was only 24 years old.

Elizabeth was buried in the chapel of the hospital which she had built at Marburg. Many and great miracles occurred at her grave. The Pope was told of them and he had them most carefully examined. After they had been fully proved, Elizabeth was canonized, in 1235, only four years after her death. The following year her body was exhumed in the presence of the Emperor Frederick II and of many bishops as well as a very large concourse of people. When the vault was opened, a sweet perfume came forth, and the body was found to be uncorrupted. The Emperor and the bishops lifted the coffin out of the grave and bore it at the head of a magnificent procession to the church, where it was placed where all had an opportunity to venerate the remains of this great saint. After the procession there was a High Mass, during which the Emperor approached the bier, laid a golden crown on the saint's head, and said: "Since I was not permitted to crown her Empress on earth, I now honour her with this crown as a queen in the kingdom of God." Elizabeth's three children were present and also the relatives who had wronged her so deeply. A magnificent church was later built in Marburg in her honour.

CHAPTER XX

The Commandments of the Church

1. God gave the Ten Commandments in the Old Covenant, that is, before the birth of Christ. In the New Covenant, Jesus confirmed them, adding new ones, for example: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (John VI, 54). "He that will be my disciple, let him deny himself" (Matth. XVI, 24). Jesus gave His commandments in a general form and left the more exact determination of them to His Church, charging the Apostles and their successors: "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matth. XXVIII, 20). He decreed at the same time that, whatsoever the Church should order, should be obeyed just as if He Himself had spoken. For He said to the Apostles and their successors: "As the Father hath sent me, so I also send you" (John XX, 21). **"Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven"** (Matth. XVIII, 18). **"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me"** (Luke X, 16). Of him who will not obey the Church, Jesus said: "He that will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican" (Matth. XVIII, 17).

2. As a result, the Church has also given commandments, taking as her standard the commandments and doctrines of Christ and for her aim the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In making laws, she duly takes into consideration the circumstances of time and place. Among the commandments of the Church there are five which all should know, namely:

1. Thou shalt keep the holydays of obligation.

2. Thou shalt hear mass devoutly on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

3. Thou shalt keep the appointed days of fasting and abstinence.

4. Thou shalt confess thy sins at least once a year and receive the Holy Eucharist at Easter time.

5. Thou shalt not solemnize marriage at forbidden times.

CHAPTER XXI

The First Commandment of the Church

1. In the Third Commandment of God we are bidden to keep holy the Lord's Day, Sunday. The Church bids us further to keep the holydays appointed by her just as we keep the Sunday. In this the Church follows the precepts given by God in the Old Covenant to the Israelites, concerning the weekly day of rest and certain feast-days, such as the Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, etc.

The chief object of ecclesiastical holydays is to remind us of the great things God has done for our redemption, for example, the birth, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ and the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. Throughout the year the life of our Redeemer should pass before our minds, filling us with gratitude and love. Certain holydays are designed to remind us of the virtues of the Mother of God and of the other saints, and to stimulate us to love and honour them, to imitate their example, and to ask for their intercession. Thus our minds are raised to Heaven and we are powerfully helped towards attaining our eternal salvation. Manifestly the first commandment of the Church was given us entirely for our own good.

2. Besides the holydays of obligation there are other festivals which are celebrated with equal devotion, but on which the Church does not oblige us to assist at divine service or to abstain from servile work. These are called "holydays of devotion." Some of them were formerly holydays of obligation.

Finally, the Church has made every day of the year the feast of some saints, without obligating us to go to church.

The succession of holydays and days of commemoration throughout the year is called the Ecclesiastical Year.

How St. Francis of Assisi Celebrated Christmas

In 1223 it occurred to St. Francis of Assisi to celebrate Christmas in a way never before known. He had a friend and patron, John Vellita, who had presented him and his Brothers in religion with the forested rock opposite the town of Greccio where they dwelled. Francis summoned Vellita to the monastery and said to him: "I wish to celebrate Christmas with you. Listen, how we are going to keep it. In the forest beside the monastery there is a grotto. There you will put up a crib filled with hay, with an ox and an ass, just as at Bethlehem. I wish to celebrate the coming of the Son of God in real earnest and to see with my own eyes how poor and wretched He was on our account." Vellita did as St. Francis desired. Towards midnight the Brothers came over from the monastery, and all the people from the neighbourhood flocked to the grotto. All carried lighted torches, the Brothers stood round the crib with their tapers, and beneath the dark vault of the oak trees it was as bright as day. Mass was said above the crib, which served as an altar that the Divine Child might be present under the form of bread and wine as He had been visibly present in Bethlehem. After the Gospel Brother Francis came forward, vested as a deacon. He spoke in words full of sweetness of the poor King who was born in this night. Each time he was about to pronounce the name of Jesus, he was overwhelmed by the ardour of emotion and said instead, "Child of Bethlehem." [1]

Sacrifices made by Negro Children to Assist at the Easter Ceremonies

A missionary in Gabun (Africa) relates the following: The village of Akork is situated in the plain of Fang, just south of the

[1] From *St. Francis of Assisi,* by John Jörgensen. The crib is far more significant than the Christmas tree or "Santa Claus," who took the place of the crib at a time when faith had grown cold. A crib should stand beneath every Christmas tree.

Equator. Four Negro girls came a long distance to this village to make their first communion. They received the Sacrament with the greatest fervour. When they were going away, I said: "My children, you know that in three weeks we shall celebrate the great feast of Easter. Ask your parents for permission to come to the mission on that day. It will be the best opportunity you can have of strengthening your souls, and once again you shall have the happiness of being united with Jesus." "We will come, Father," they answered. On Easter Sunday morning they all arrived and greeted me with a joyful "Here we are!" But in what a pitiable condition those poor children were! Their naked shoulders showed the marks of a cruel whipping. They were covered with stripes, and there was not a spot free from bruises. "Oh, children, who has done this to you?" I asked, shocked at the sight. "I will tell you how it happened," said the eldest. "You asked us to come to the mission station at Easter to receive Jesus again. But father would not allow us. We begged and wept, but all to no purpose. Our parents became angry and threatened to give us fifty lashes if we went. But we said to one another, "Let us go in God's name!" and that same evening we untied the boat. But we were seen, and father kept his word. Fifty lashes! Oh, how they did hurt! Later they believed we were cowed and did not pay much heed to us. We stole away, and here we are, Father. You will soon say Holy Mass now, will you not?" "My dear children, you should not have come," I exclaimed. "How could you risk such treatment?" "How can you say that, Father?" cried Marie Rose, the youngest of the sisters. "What would *you* have done, you who are a missionary? What would *you* do if you had to choose between Jesus and a whipping?" There was no answer to this, and I asked gently: "What will happen when you return home?" "When we return?—when we return?" said Christina, shuddering: "Ah! What does it matter? Lashes will pass away, but Jesus will remain!"

CHAPTER XXII

The Second Commandment of the Church

The second commandment of the Church illustrates the Third Commandment of God. It tells how Sundays and holydays of obligation should be sanctified, that is, chiefly by hearing Holy Mass devoutly.

1. The Church has the most important reasons for giving this commandment. The Mass is the most sublime divine service, for in it Jesus Christ sacrifices Himself to His Heavenly Father. Further, in Holy Mass we receive the greatest graces from God; for Jesus Himself prays for us. It is also a great consolation for us to be with Jesus, who sacrifices Himself for us with so much love. Therefore, Jesus Himself has commanded us to share in His sacrifice. For when, at the Last Supper, He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, He said: "Do this in commemoration of me."

It is quite proper to worship God "in the temple of nature" on Sunday. But God asks more than that. He wills that we should come to that temple in which His Son renews the Sacrifice of the Cross. He who remains indifferent towards this sacrifice inflicts the deepest mortification on the loving heart of the Saviour and forfeits his share in the grace and eternal salvation which He merited for us on the Cross. To miss Holy Mass, or an important part of it, on Sundays or holydays of obligation, of our own free will and without an important reason, is generally a mortal sin.[1]

[1] If we come late to Mass, for example, after the Offertory, we should, if possible, make this good by hearing at another Mass the parts we have missed. But we must always assist at the Consecration and the Communion of the same Mass.

2. We are excused from hearing Mass when it is impossible (in case of illness, for example), to do so, or when we would incur great hardships (when, for example, the Church is more than three miles away); when a great risk would have to be incurred in order to hear Mass (for instance, if it should mean leaving little children alone or neglecting relatives who are very ill). Generally speaking, shopping, visiting, or excursions are not sufficient excuses. From time to time cases may occur in which the parish priest may dispense individual persons or families. Before taking on a new situation or post, we should always make inquiries whether there are facilities for hearing Holy Mass on Sundays in the district.

3. It is not enough merely to assist at Holy Mass; we must do so *devoutly*. Our demeanour must be reverential, our attention must be directed towards the various parts of the Mass, and our minds occupied entirely with God and holy things. The greater our devotion, the more graces are infused into our souls from the altar.

4. The *sermon* is a part of the Sunday service; for formerly a sermon was always preached during Holy Mass, after the Gospel. Therefore, when the Church commands us to assist at Holy Mass, she also exhorts us to hear the sermon. In the sermon the Word of God,—that is, what God has revealed and especially the teaching of Jesus Christ,—is read and explained. Jesus says: **"He that is of God, heareth the words of God"** (John VIII, 47).

It is necessary for us to hear the Word of God regularly, in order that we may learn to know the will of God and become imbued with His love and an ardent desire to serve Him. Sinners are converted and the just are fortified by hearing sermons. Innumerable happy souls now in Heaven would never have arrived there if they had not zealously attended sermons, and many, many souls are in hell that would never have gone there, had they listened to sermons with attention. Of course,

it is not enough simply to hear a sermon; we must listen to it attentively and meditate on it; we must apply it to ourselves and order our lives accordingly. Jesus says: "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke XI, 28).

Easter in Uganda

The Superior of the Missionary Fathers in the district of Villa Mariya in Uganda (Africa) in a letter describes the celebration of Holy Week and Easter. His account shows how well the Christians in that region observe the commandments of the Church.

"We have had a splendid celebration of the festival of Easter," he says. "All the numerous huts around our settlement were full of natives. Special accommodations had to be provided in the school, and even the veranda of the dormitories had to be used; in spite of all these provisions, many of the neo-converts had to sleep in the open air. It was touching to see the men, women, and children arriving in bands of ten or twelve the week before Palm Sunday. Each carried on his head a little bundle with food to last for several days. The mothers had their babies fastened to their backs. Several had to journey two or three days through swamps where the water reached their waists and sometimes their shoulders. But nothing keeps these happy people from coming after a strict fast to make the spiritual exercises and receive their Easter Communion with devotion and reverence. These zealous Christians prepare for the feast by the most severe penance, abstaining from meat from Ash Wednesday to Easter, and taking only one meal a day. There is never any question of dispensation; it would not occur to any one to ask for it; they would consider it a shameful thing to do. The missionary would have to give an express command before a mother would eat something at noon. And even then the whole meal consists of only a few potatoes cooked without any condiments. On Palm Sunday we had about 3,500 Christians at the mission. At 5 o'clock in the evening the exercises began which were to close at Easter. Our drum corps summoned the faithful to the church four times a day to hear the instructions and make the Stations of the Cross. At the first sound the noise of the assembled crowd gave way to the deepest silence. This silence was observed right to the end of the exercises and without any intervention on our part; so vividly did they realize the value of

recollection. They said the rosary on the way to church, spoke but little at home, went to bed early, and the following morning at 4 o'clock waited in large crowds for the opening of the church door. It is needless to say how sincere and humble were their confessions, how repentant they were, and how full of good resolutions. The three missionaries at the station spent the greater part of Good Friday in the confessional; yet they could not manage to hear the confessions of the whole congregation. The number that came to assist at this great feast of the Church was so large that there was no room for them all in the church; scarcely half found place. So we erected an altar in the open air, decorating it as best we could with flowers and foliage. Thus High Mass was celebrated in the midst of six or seven thousand Christians, who sang their Alleluia with the greatest enthusiasm. As a reward for their self-sacrifice the risen Saviour poured into their hearts the most profound peace and joy."

CHAPTER XXIII

The Third Commandment of the Church

In this commandment the Church requires us to observe certain restrictions in eating.

1. Jesus performed the most severe penance and fasted for our sins. Therefore it is right that we too should do penance, especially by fasting. For this reason the Church commands us to fast.

We are commanded to fast also in order that we may learn to deny ourselves and to overcome our passions. Jesus said: "He that will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matth. XVI, 24). Self-denial and self-conquest are absolutely necessary for us. We often find it difficult to keep the commandments and to practise the Christian virtues, and then we must do violence to ourselves and overcome our rebellious human nature. Sinful desires often rise up within us; then again we must overcome ourselves in order to master our desires. Fasting is the best preparation for this. By fasting our lower sensual instincts are weakened and the mind raised to God more easily and freely. Finally, it is God's will that we should become like His Son in suffering, before we share His glory. "We are . . . joint heirs with Christ: yet so, if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him" (Rom. VIII, 17). "They that are Christ's, have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences" (Gal. V, 24).

Our physical health is also benefited by fasting, provided, of course, we do not overdo it.

2. The Church prescribes two kinds of fasting: taking but one full meal a day, and abstaining from certain kinds of food.

Fasting in the strict sense consists in taking only one full meal a day, with a small collation or lunch in the evening. We are commanded to fast in this manner every day in Lent, with the exception of Sundays and certain other specified days. Persons under 21 or over 60 years are not obliged to fast; the sick and convalescent, those who have to work hard, and all whom fasting would hinder in fulfilling the duties of their vocation are exempt from this law.

3. A milder form of fasting is called *abstinence* and consists in abstaining from flesh meat. Meat dishes are those which are prepared from the flesh of warm-blooded animals (also bacon, liver, brain, meat soup, sausage). But all kinds of grease may be used in preparing the food. The flesh of fish, crabs, etc., is not forbidden.

We are obliged to abstain from flesh meat on all Fridays, except those on which holydays of obligation fall, on Ash Wednesday, and certain other days.

In most dioceses the following persons are exempt from the law of abstinence: children under seven years of age, the sick and convalescent (if the doctor considers they have need of meat or if they cannot digest Lenten dishes), children and servants if parents or employers do not provide abstinence food, the very poor, whose meals are scanty and uncertain. But on Good Friday all—except the sick and very poor—must abstain from flesh meat. Hard labour or old age exempts people from fasting, but not from the law of abstinence.

Every Catholic must conform to the Lenten regulations of the diocese in which he lives.

4. The Church expects us to make up for the more strict fasting of former times by greater zeal in prayer, by more frequent reception of the Sacraments, and by alms-giving, es-

pecially in Lent. It is also recommended to fast more strictly than the Lenten regulations prescribe.

The faithful observance of the law of fasting and abstinence is a courageous profession of the Catholic faith. Jesus Christ has promised: "Everyone that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven" (Matth. X, 32).

What does the Church command us in the matter of fasting?

The Church commands us: (1) to take but one full meal a day, and (2) to abstain from flesh meat on certain prescribed days.

Why does the Church command us to fast?

The Church commands us to fast: (1) in order that we may do penance for our sins, and (2) that we may more easily overcome our evil inclinations.

Fasting and Health

One of the most famous physicians of all times was Hippocrates, who lived in Greece about the year 400 B. C. He died in 364 at the age of 140 years. Somebody once asked him how he came to live so long? He replied: "My appetite is never quite satisfied when I rise from the table; I could always eat more. It is to this that I ascribe my advanced age."

Ludovici Cornaro, the scion of a distinguished family, between the age of 35 to 40, was constantly ill as a result of physical weakness and intemperance. He had recourse to various remedies, but in vain. Finally, when he was at death's door, the doctors told him there was still one remedy, if he would only use it perseveringly and patiently. This remedy was to live an extremely temperate and abstemious life. Cornaro followed the advice. From that time he ate only the simplest food and no more than twelve ounces daily. He never rose from the table fully sated. After a few months he felt stronger, and soon was perfectly well. He continued to live in this manner and his health became perfect. When he was 78 years old, he decided, at the doctor's advice and the entreaties of his friends, to take more food; the result was that he nearly died.

Then he returned to his former spare diet. When he was eighty-three years old, he wrote his famous book on "The Manifold Advantages of a Temperate Life." In this work, from which the above details are taken, he said he was still so agile that he could easily jump on a horse from the ground, that he liked to sing with his grandchildren and that his voice was stronger and clearer than ever before. He writes: "Moderation makes the voice clear, the body agile, the mind vigorous, the disposition cheerful, the memory good." When he was ninety-one, he wrote to the patriarch of Aquileja: "My strength seems to increase, the older I become. . . . I write seven or eight hours every day." When he was ninety-five, he wrote a treatise in which he said: "I am still fresh and strong, joyous and as contented as if I were only twenty-five years old." He lived to the ripe old age of 104 and died peacefully in his arm-chair after receiving the Sacraments and putting his affairs in order (1566).

A Young Martyr to the Law of Abstinence

On the 17th of March, 1893, an innocent Christian boy of eight years became the victim of the Moslems' hatred of Christianity. It was in Ipek, a village of Albania. While the child was staying at the house of a Turkish relative, the latter tried in every possible way to induce him to spit on a crucifix and to eat flesh meat on a day of abstinence. His efforts were in vain. The little boy pressed the crucifix to his heart and kissed it fervently again and again. The fanatical Turk became so enraged that he fired three revolver shots at the boy, who died a few minutes later.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Fourth Commandment of the Church

1. Jesus Christ Himself commanded that we should confess our sins when He said to His Apostles (and their successors): "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." He also commanded that we should receive the Blessed Eucharist when He said: **"Amen, amen I say to you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you"** (John VI, 54).

But Jesus did not expressly say how often we must confess our sins and receive Holy Communion. For many centuries the Church had no need to give a precept on this head because the faithful were zealous in receiving the Sacraments. It was only when the primitive fervour diminished that (in 1215) the Church strictly commanded that every Catholic should receive Holy Communion at least once a year, at Easter. This commandment applies also to children as soon as they can tell good from evil and distinguish the Divine Bread from ordinary food and receive it reverently. The Church prescribed the reception of the Holy Eucharist at Easter because Jesus instituted Holy Communion at this time in commemoration of His Passion. The season within which the Blessed Eucharist should be received varies in different dioceses. Any person who has postponed receiving Holy Communion until Easter should go to the Sacraments as soon as possible.

2. The words "at least" show that it is the urgent wish of the Church that we should receive the Sacraments of Penance

and the Eucharist oftener than once a year. In this also the Church has in view the salvation of souls.

Frequent confession is very commendable because we ought not to remain long in sin, especially mortal sin. It is true, we can obtain forgiveness of mortal sins before confession if we make an act of *perfect contrition;* but it is not so easy to excite ourselves to perfect contrition and therefore, generally speaking, it is only by going to confession that we can be certain of forgiveness. Moreover, in confession, by the preceding examination of conscience and the instruction we receive from the confessor, we learn to know ourselves better and to guard against the dangers that threaten our soul. Finally, at every confession we make we receive special assistance from God in our endeavour not to sin again.

3. The Church is particularly desirous that we should go to Holy Communion *frequently,* nay, that it should be as it was in the early days of Christianity, when most of the faithful received daily. Jesus called His Body in the Most Blessed Sacrament our bread: "The bread that I shall give you is my flesh" (John VI, 52). By this He showed that we should often receive His Body in order to become holy. Jesus wants to strengthen our love for Him through this Bread of the soul, so that we may remain faithful to Him notwithstanding a thousand temptations and dangers that may beset us. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood shall remain in me, and I in him" (John VI, 57). We cannot show our gratitude to the Saviour for the love He has shown us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar more effectively than by the frequent reception of this Sacrament with a pure heart and true devotion.

Happy First Communicants

A priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee relates the following:

"There are numerous apostates here whom the priest cannot easily reach. Often the good shepherd makes use of the children

to smooth the way to grace. On the day of the children's First Holy Communion last June, a little communicant arrived home in her beautiful dress and with the peace of God written on her countenance. Outside the house she met a neighbour's daughter, the good child of an apostate Catholic. This little one, full of curiosity, inquired why her friend was so beautifully dressed and looked so happy. The first communicant explained in her childlike way the happiness she felt on the day of her first Communion. The other girl ran home, threw her arms round her mother's neck, and amid tears begged her, saying: "I want to be happy like my friend; I also want to make my first Holy Communion." The parents consented, the child received instructions, the mother was reconciled to God, and the father is considering the matter.

A boy, also a first communicant, one day met a comrade with whom he often played. The latter, quite at a loss to account for the change in his friend's appearance, inquired for the cause. The former replied: "It is something you must feel; I cannot describe it to you; but I have never felt so contented and happy as I feel today." The other boy, the son of an apostate Catholic, who knew nothing of religion, asked: "Could I also be as happy as you?" "Oh, yes; just go to the Fathers in the monastery; they will put you right," was the reply. A few days later the Father Guardian was visited by a rather shy boy of thirteen years who said: "I want to become as happy as my friend N—— and go to Holy Communion." "And who are you?" the priest asked. It transpired that the poor boy knew no religion whatever, both his parents having given up the faith of their childhood. A visit to the parents was made, and now the boy looks forward to his first Holy Communion, while the parents have again become practical Catholics.

A Soldier's Happiness

Fr. Raymond Dreiling, O.F.M., relates the following:

A soldier arrived home from the front on short leave. He had come part of the way on foot and had fasted until 2.30 P. M. in order to be able to receive Holy Communion. A volunteer, who worked in a government office, fasted until 1.30 P. M. every day for a week; he could not come before that hour, and he did not want to give up daily Communion. Another soldier had lost both eyes. Once when I attempted to console him, he said quite calmly:

"There is no darkness in my soul. It is full of light; today I received my God."

Lieutenant Burger relates in his book "With the Tyrolese in Russia":

I observed the people after Communion day, and I confess, I never before saw them so happy and joyful. "Now, Lieutenant, we are all right inside; and ready to meet the Russians." Even later they often talked of that day, and how happy they were.

CHAPTER XXV

The Fifth Commandment of the Church

The seasons in which it is forbidden to solemnize marriage are: Advent, including Christmas Day, and Lent, including Easter Sunday. Noisy entertainments, especially dances, are also forbidden at these times. The Church desires that our minds should be more than ordinarily occupied with earnest, holy thoughts and not distracted by noisy amusements.

CHAPTER XXVI

When We Sin

1. God is our Lord and Master. He that violates God's commandments does wrong and commits a sin. For Jesus said to His Apostles and their successors: "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me" (Luke X, 16).

He that violates a commandment of God without being aware of it, or for the moment does not realize what he is doing, does not sin. Therefore if any person should eat meat on a day of abstinence because he forgets that it is an abstinence day, he does not commit a sin. But if he intentionally disregards abstinence days, he is not excused. He that unintentionally violates a commandment of God does not commit a sin. Therefore, if anyone has impure thoughts against his will, he does not sin even if he cannot drive them away.

The commandments of the Church are not binding in cases where they can be observed only with great and extraordinary difficulty or danger. (With regard to this compare what has been said above about the second and third commandments of the Church.)

2. We must fear mortal sins most of all. They kill the soul, and hence are called deadly sins. Venial sins do not kill the soul, but expose it to grave danger. They are called venial sins, because they are more easily forgiven.

He who wilfully turns away from God and prefers any creature to Him commits a mortal sin. This happens when, of our free will and with full knowledge, we violate a commandment of God (or of the Church) in some important matter. Impor-

tant matters are, for example, faith, the obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays, chastity. Sins against our neighbour are mortal if the injury we do him is excessive. Some mortal sins are more grievous than others.

A venial sin is committed if we violate a commandment in some minor matter, for example, if we eat a little bit of meat on a day of abstinence, or if we transgress the law in an important matter without full knowledge or consent.

In many cases the difference between mortal and venial sin is known only to God. Let us obey Him, our Lord and Father, in little as well as in great things. This is the road to Heaven. "Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent" (Ecclus. XXI, 2).

When do we commit sin?

We commit sin when we violate a commandment of God wilfully and with full knowledge.

When do we commit a mortal sin?

We commit a mortal sin when we violate a commandment of God in an important matter with full knowledge and consent.

From the Confessions of St. Augustine

St. Augustine was a great sinner in his youth. How sincerely he repented of his conduct is shown by the following passage from his "Confessions" (Book II, Ch. 4, 9):

"Everyone knows, O Lord, that Thy law punisheth theft, and also the law written in the hearts of men which even iniquity itself cannot blot out. For what thief is willing to have another steal from him? For even he that is rich will not endure another stealing for want. Yet I had a mind to commit theft, and I committed it, moved not by want or need, but by a loathing to be honest and a longing to sin; for I stole that of which I had plenty, and much better. Neither was I fond of enjoying the things that I stole, but only fond of the theft and the sin. There was a pear tree near our vineyard, loaded with fruits, which were neither tempting for their beauty nor their taste. To shake off and carry away the fruit of this tree, a company of us wicked youths went

late at night, having, according to a wicked custom, played till then in the yards; and thence we carried our great load, not to eat the fruit, but to be cast to the hogs; and if we tasted any of them, the only pleasure therein was because we were doing what we should not do. . . . What then was it that I loved in that theft, that nocturnal crime of my sixteenth year? Was it that I was pleased to act against the law, by deceit at least, since I could not by power? . . . I took pleasure in that which was not lawful simply because it was not lawful. What return shall I make to the Lord, that my memory now reflects on these things and my soul need not be in fear about them? I will love Thee, O Lord, and give Thee thanks, and confess thy name because Thou hast forgiven me my great sins and wicked deeds. . . . Whoever he is who, being called to Thee, hath followed Thy voice and avoided these things, which he here readeth me recounting and confessing, let him not scorn me, . . . but let him love Thee as much—yea, rather more; because, by that same hand by which he sees me recovered from such great maladies of my sins, he sees himself preserved from being involved in as great evils. . . . If I had been alone, I should not have done it, I should certainly not have done it. . . . O friendship, what an enemy! O seduction of the mind and unaccountable greed of doing mischief out of play and wantonness . . . only because it is said: 'Let us go, Let us do it!' and one is ashamed not to be shameless."

Christian Indians

Monsignor Durieu, Bishop of a diocese in Colombia, when he was yet a simple priest, gave his Indian converts an exhortation on contrition. When he had ended his address, an old Indian stood up and said: "Father, you have said something I do not understand. You have told us we should excite ourselves to contrition and sorrow when we have committed a sin. But how is it possible to offend God when we have once received Him into our hearts? There are six families of us living together, and I can assure you that since we have received Holy Communion, I have never noticed so much as one venial sin, nor once heard the least uncharitable remark or angry word from any one of them. It is true I cannot peer into their hearts; but so far as mine is concerned, I can assure you, it is well disposed."

CHAPTER XXVII

The Wickedness of Sin and its Sad Consequences

1. He that commits a mortal sin is guilty of a frightful crime. God is our Lord, for He created us, and we belong to Him and are bound to do His will. God is infinitely great and mighty. He created millions and millions of stars, each of which is a world in itself; He directs their course by His mere will. Compared to God, man is as a grain of dust, he is nothing. Yet man dares to say to his Lord: "I will not serve Thee!"

Moreover, God is our loving Father. He created us out of love and tenderly cares for us always. He gave His only begotten Son to save us. He wishes to give Himself to us in Heaven and make us indescribably happy. But the man who commits a mortal sin despises all this goodness and turns away from God by doing what is an abomination in His sight.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sacrificed Himself on the cross and by His death opened Heaven to us. For this He merits all our love. We have often promised Him our love and fidelity, especially at Baptism, confession, and Holy Communion. He that commits a mortal sin breaks faith with Jesus, by preferring Him to a mere creature, to some temporal thing, or to sensual pleasure.

In Baptism the Holy Ghost consecrated us as His temple and took up His abode within us. But He cannot remain in a sinful heart. Therefore he that commits a mortal sin drives the Holy Ghost out of his heart.

Thus the sinner, in committing a mortal sin, outrages all

three Persons of the Divine Trinity. His crime is infinitely great. Let us die rather than commit such a crime!

2. Mortal sin entails dire consequences. First of all, it robs the soul of sanctifying grace. The soul of such a sinner is more loathsome in the eyes of God than a decaying corpse in the eyes of men. He that commits a mortal sin no longer has God for his Father; he has made God his enemy. Heaven is lost to him as are also all his past merits. God threatens severe punishment. He may at any moment summon the sinner before His judgment seat, where He will pronounce the sentence: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matth. XXV, 41). An infinite crime entails infinite punishment.

Therefore those who consider mortal sin to be a trifling matter commit a serious, nay, a fatal error. Our greatest enemy cannot do us more harm than we do ourselves when we commit a mortal sin. Holy Scripture says: "They that commit sin and iniquity, are enemies to their own soul" (Tob. XII, 10). Therefore let us resolve rather to die than to sin! When we are tempted to commit a mortal sin, let us say: "I must die, and I know not when, or how, or where; but this I *do* know: if I die in mortal sin, I am lost forever."

3. Nor should we be indifferent to venial sins. It is true, venial sins do not deprive us of the grace of God or entail eternal damnation; but they are an insult to God, acts of base ingratitude which entail painful punishment in this life and the next. He that commits venial sins carelessly will soon lose his horror for mortal sin, and God will gradually withdraw His grace from him. Sacred Scripture warns us: **"He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little"** (Ecclus. XIX, 1). Therefore, if we wish to escape mortal sin and avoid hell, we must guard also against venial sins, especially those that are quite voluntary and deliberate.

"O my God, Thou hatest sin and punishest it severely,—and I have sinned so often. Thou art full of love towards me,

and hast died for me,—yet I have frequently insulted Thee. I am sincerely sorry for all my sins and will never offend Thee again. I will also avoid all occasions of sin. Merciful Father, forgive me!"

Of what is he guilty who commits a mortal sin?

He who commits a mortal sin despises God, his Lord and Father, breaks faith with Jesus Christ, and expels the Holy Ghost from his soul.

What injury does the sinner do to himself?

He that commits a mortal sin forfeits grace, the sonship of God, and Heaven; he merits for himself eternal damnation.

The Road to Sin

Judas Iscariot (that is, the man from Kariot), was chosen as an apostle by Jesus, who made him His trusted friend, a witness of His miracles, and a listener to all His teaching. What a priceless grace! Judas might have been a great saint, had he done his part. But he did not co-operate with grace; he yielded to his evil inclinations. Being entrusted with the small sum of money which Jesus and His disciples possessed, Judas took advantage of the situation and committed petty thefts. The oftener he stole, the greedier he became; the oftener he lied, the more his heart was steeped in falsehood. He became a hypocrite and lost his confidence and even his faith in Jesus. He even expected to become rich and powerful through Jesus; because his expectations were foiled, he became more and more estranged from the Master, though all the while pretending to be His faithful disciple.

The high priests and the Pharisees had decided to put Jesus to death, but because of the people, they did not dare to arrest Him. Judas felt that the opportunity had come of gaining a considerable sum of money, and at the same time getting rid of His Master. He went to the enemies of Jesus and asked them: "What will you give me if I deliver Him to you?" They offered him thirty pieces of silver, and he accepted. Henceforth he sought to deliver Jesus secretly into their hands.

Jesus, the Son of God, knew it all; yet He treated Judas with the greatest kindness, hoping to soften his heart. Moreover He re-

peatedly showed him that He knew his plans. When, before the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of the Apostles, including the traitor, he said: "You are clean, but not all." At table He said, deeply moved: "One of you is about to betray me." But the heart of Judas was hardened. He even asked: "Is it I, Lord?" Jesus answered in a low voice: "Thou hast said it." Aloud He said: "That which thou dost, do quickly." Judas left the room. "It was night," says the Scripture,—night without, and night within the heart of the traitor. Because Judas obstinately withstood divine grace, God deprived him of His grace, and the Devil took possession of his soul.

Judas now proceeded to carry out his treacherous plan. He knew that Jesus was accustomed to go to Mount Olivet to pray after supper. Thither he conducted the servants and soldiers who were to take Jesus prisoner. He said to them: "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; hold him fast." When Jesus came to Mount Olivet that evening, He knew He was going to meet His enemies. Judas went up to Him, pretended friendship, and said: "Hail, Rabbi!" Nay he even dared to kiss Jesus. Once more the gentle Master appealed to his better nature: "Friend, whereto art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?" But it was all in vain; Judas had become hardened through continual sinning.

After Jesus had been condemned to death, Judas recognized the enormity of his crime, took His ill-gotten gain back to the high priest, and said: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." But he could not bring himself to ask God for pardon. He fell into despair and in his despair committed yet another horrible crime,—he hanged himself.

Thus Judas cast himself into hell. Jesus said of him: "It were better for him had he never been born." Judas has been suffering frightful tortures in hell for nearly 1900 years, and he will continue to suffer for all eternity. His sins, small in the beginning, finally brought him to this. It is a terrible example of the truth of what Holy Scripture says: "He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little."

CHAPTER XXVIII

Pride and Humility—Avarice and Generosity

1. Among the various kinds of sins some are particularly dangerous. While they are not always mortal sins, they lead to the commission of many other sins and often, in the end, to eternal damnation—especially if they become habitual. These sins are called *capital* sins. There are seven of them.

The seven capital sins are: pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and sloth. These sins are contrary to the various commandments of God; pride, avarice, and sloth, to the commandment to love God; envy, gluttony, and anger, to the Fifth Commandment; lust, to the Sixth Commandment. They are often denounced in Holy Scripture and the opposite virtues recommended.

2. Pride consists in overestimating oneself, that is, considering onself to be better than one really is. The proud man sets great store on advantages which he does not possess or on things which are worthless in the eyes of God, for example, riches. Or he boasts of his virtues; but these are gifts from God and therefore the credit for them belongs to God. The proud man undervalues and despises his fellowmen; but perhaps they stand higher than he in the eyes of God. We must not even despise great sinners because, without the grace of God, we also should fall into the greatest sins. The avaricious man covets fame and glory. But God desires that we should do good, not to win the praises of men, but for God's sake. We should rejoice when our actions and efforts receive approval, especially from our superiors. This approval should encourage

us to make further efforts. But our ultimate aim should not be to gain the approval of men, but to please God.

Pride leads to disobedience, quarrelling, and strife, envy and hatred, lying and hypocrisy, unbelief and impenitence. God punishes the proud man by withdrawing his grace from him and permitting him to sink lower and lower. Sacred Scripture says: "Pride goeth before destruction: and the spirit is lifted up before a fall" (Prov. XVI, 18). "God has made the roots of proud nations to wither" (Ecclus. X, 18). If pride steals upon us, let us remember our frailty, our faults, and our sins.

The opposite of pride is *humility*. It consists in knowing one's weakness and sinful inclinations and acting accordingly. The humble man keenly feels his nothingness in relation to God. He gladly subjects himself to others and despises no one. He dislikes to speak of himself or his merits. Jesus says: "He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted" (Luke XVIII, 14). God will exalt the humble man by giving him abundant grace and helping him to lead a virtuous life and to attain eternal salvation.

3. True *self-respect* is not opposed to humility. Being creatures endowed with reason, we are far above the animals and irrational nature. Further, through sanctifying grace we are children of God and heirs of Heaven. We should prize this high honour and not make ourselves the servants of irrational creatures by worshipping gold and silver; nor should we sink so low as to become the slaves of our sensual instincts. We are born for higher things. Holy Scripture exhorts us "not to be the bondslaves of men" (1 Cor. VII, 23), by looking on them as our highest lords and aiming to please only them. Whatever we rightly esteem in ourselves we must regard as a gift from God. "By the grace of God, I am what I am" (1 Cor. XV, 10).

4. A special kind of pride is *vanity*. Vain people find their joy in "vain things," that is, things of no real importance, such as physical attractiveness, expensive clothes, finery, and baubles.

They try to draw the attention of others to themselves and to please others. Often the care of the soul and service of God are neglected, and salvation is lost through such folly. Vanity easily leads to wantonness and lust.

Opposed to vanity is *modesty*. The modest person does not wish to draw the eyes of others to himself, but desires to be good interiorly and to please God. He thus involuntarily gains the esteem and love of good men. St. Peter exhorts women especially: "Adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel: but the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God" (1 Pet. III, 3–4).

5. *Avarice* is an inordinate desire for money and earthly goods. We may and ought to strive after the things that enable us to maintain ourselves and our families in reasonable comfort. But the miser strives after material possessions for their own sake. He can never get enough and will not give of his superfluity to relieve the corporeal and spiritual needs of others. He attaches his heart to, and becomes a slave of, money.

Avarice hardens the heart and makes it indifferent to God and spiritual things. It leads to theft, deceit, and usury; nay, all kinds of sins are committed for the sake of money.

If we wish to guard against avarice, we must practise the opposite virtue, namely, generosity. It is especially commendable not only to give freely of our superfluity, but also to deny ourselves in order to be able to give. Jesus tells us: "Give, and it shall be given to you. . . . For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again" (Luke VI, 38). If we give for God's sake, God will reward us with spiritual and heavenly goods.

Wherein does pride consist?

Pride consists in an inordinate desire for honours.

In what does avarice consist?

Avarice consists in an excessive desire for money and earthly goods.

The Pharisee and the Publican

In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, Jesus graphically contrasts pride and humility. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect whose adherents prided themselves on observing the law of Moses with great rigour. But in reality they looked mainly for the praise of men, and therefore their good deeds had no value in the eyes of God. A "publican" was a tax collector. These officials were wont to practice much injustice and for that reason were despised by the people.

Jesus tells us: "Two men went up into the Temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee standing prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in a week: I give tithes of all I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven; but struck his breast, saying: God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man [the publican] went down into his house justified rather than the other [the Pharisee]: because everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke XVIII, 10-14).

The publican went home justified, that is, in the state of grace. God pardoned him because he confessed his sins humbly and repented of them, and was ready to atone for any injustice of which he had been guilty. But the Pharisee did not go home in the state of grace. God abhorred him on account of his pride, and did not forgive him his other sins either, because the conceited fool did not confess them or repent of them. Thus God humbled him who exalted himself and exalted him who humbled himself; and Jesus tells us that God will always act thus.

An Humble Bishop

St. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, when travelling from Avignon to Lyons, once entered a public inn, intending to spend the night there. But all the rooms were already taken. His companions wanted to tell the innkeeper who the belated guest was. But the

Bishop forbade them to do so, saying: "Do you not know that I am a man of peace? Have I not caused enough trouble and anxiety during my life, without giving further trouble?" He went to a barn and, in spite of his illness and the severe cold, slept in his clothes on the straw. When, on the following morning, two Jesuits who had slept in the inn heard what had happened, they expressed their regret to the Bishop at not having been told of his arrival; they would gladly have given up their rooms for him. Francis said pleasantly as he thanked them: "I did not want you to do this. In fact I owe a very good night to the occurrence, for I never slept better in my life."

An Humble King

The saintly King Edward, who reigned in England in the eleventh century, once met a cripple, who could only go about on his hands and knees. The poor man cried out to one of the courtiers. "What can I do for you?" asked the latter. The cripple said: "If the King would bear me to church on his back, I should become straight." When the King heard the strange request, he thanked God, took the poor cripple on his shoulders, and carried him into a nearby church. Before he had reached the house of God with his burden, the cripple was healed. Thus God showed how pleasing the King's humility was to Him.

CHAPTER XXIX

Envy and Good-will—Anger and Patience—Sloth and Zeal

1. Envy consists in being disturbed by the good fortune of others. It is foolish to be disturbed at our neighbour's good fortune, for his happiness cannot hurt us. Envy is detestable because it betrays a lack of charity. It is contrary to the chief commandment given by Jesus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The worst kind of envy is that which is directed against our neighbour's virtue and grudges him divine grace.

Envy leads to many sins and crimes. It was through envy that the devil tempted our First Parents and plunged the whole human race into misery. It was through envy that Cain murdered his brother Abel. It was through envy that the high priests, doctors, and Pharisees slandered Jesus and nailed Him to the cross.

When envy is about to steal into our hearts, let us consider that God directs our neighbour's lot in life as well as ours and that He allows everything to happen for the best if we love Him. Let us be content with what He decrees or permits.

Opposed to envy is good-will. "Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep" (Rom. XII, 15), the Apostle exhorts us. In this way we shall please God and men, and avoid many sorrowful hours.

2. *Anger* consists in becoming excited and embittered without due cause. If we become angry because wrong is done or God is offended, and do not allow ourselves to be carried away by our emotion so as to act unjustly or inconsiderately,—this is righteous anger. But if we become angry because someone contradicts or insults us, or because our efforts are not suc-

cessful, or the weather is not to our liking, or something goes against our wishes,—this is unrighteous and sinful anger. We are not gods and cannot expect that everything should go in accordance with our wishes. We are poor sinners who must do penance and bear our cross if we would merit Heaven. Jesus says: **"He that will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me"** (Matth. XVI, 24). He also requires that we should pardon those who have injured us, because they, too, are children of God.

Unrighteous and uncontrolled anger may cause great mischief. It prevents wise deliberation, deprives us of the power of judgment, and leads to insults, cursing, blasphemy, murder, homicide. "The anger of man worketh not the justice of God" (James I, 20).

Jesus by His example has taught us *patience* and *meekness*. When He stood before the High Priest, awaiting His sentence, a soldier struck Him on the cheek,—Him, the Lord of the world! But Jesus meekly said: "If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou me?" When He was being crowned with thorns, He bore the most terrible mockery in perfect silence. When He was crucified, He prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Jesus exhorts us, saying: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matth. XI, 29). Let us remember this when anger threatens to rise within us. Let us pray and wrestle against this vice. "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good" (Rom. XII, 21).

3. *Sloth* (as a capital sin) consists in refusing to make proper efforts to please God and to save one's soul. The slothful man shuns the effort that is needed for prayer, for serving God, and receiving the Sacraments. He thinks it too much trouble to acquire a thorough grounding in his religion or to fight against his wicked inclinations. He wastes the precious time which God gives him to work out his salvation. The sloth-

ful will not gain Heaven. Jesus has said: "Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able" (Luke XIII, 24). At the Last Judgment, Jesus will say: "The unprofitable servant cast ye out into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matth. XXV, 30). Let us consider how the Apostles burned with zeal for Jesus Christ, how the martyrs joyfully sacrificed their lives for Him, how the saints lived every day, every hour, every moment for God. Let us make every effort to serve God and merit Heaven. The prize to be won is worth the effort.

Almost every man has a special leaning towards one or other of the seven capital sins. Examine yourself as to where you are weak and fight your besetting weakness day by day.

Garcia Moreno, President of Ecuador

Gabriel Garcia Moreno, born in 1821, was a lawyer. At that time revolutions were frequent in Ecuador and one tyrant after another abused the public power. Moreno made up his mind to rescue his country. Having no other means at his command, he established a paper, called "The Scourge," in which he attacked all acts of injustice that came to his notice. For this he was again and again illegally imprisoned and, in the end, exiled. He utilized the time of his exile by continuing his studies in Paris. When he returned to Ecuador, he became professor of chemistry and rector of the University of Quito.

In 1860 Moreno was elected president of the Republic. He restored peace and order in the country. His greatest desire was that the Church should be free. His predecessors had enslaved the Church; for example, they did not leave the education of the future clergy to be directed by the bishops, but themselves directed it according to their own ideas. As a consequence there was much immorality among the clergy. President Moreno sent an ambassador to Pope Pius IX with the following message: "I wish the Church to be completely free and the secular clergy and religious Orders to be reformed. I beg the Pope to send us a nuncio empowered to reform the clergy." The Pope gladly consented and

a concordat was made between the Pope and the Republic of Ecuador under the terms of which unworthy members of the clergy were removed, exemplary priests, both secular and religious, were brought into the country from abroad, and new bishoprics were erected.

In 1865 Garcia Moreno's term as president came to an end; but he was re-elected in 1869 and founded many new schools, elementary as well as higher, sent missionaries to the 200,000 Indians in the backwoods, almost all of whom led a nomadic life, with the result that in six years a large number of these Indians settled down and a church and a school were erected in each of the larger settlements. Under Moreno's government, religion and education made rapid progress and the number of crimes decreased. In 1873 Moreno wrote to a friend: "God has blessed us; there is visible progress throughout the country. Everywhere improvement can be seen in morality, thanks to the Jesuits, the Dominicans, the Redemptorists, and other religious Orders, who assist our good and most zealous clergy. When we were young, one could count the number of those who performed their religious duties; today one can count the number who neglect them. Our material progress is no less astonishing. One could really say: God helps us as a kind Father helps his child to take his first little steps."

Garcia Moreno was himself the embodiment of the maxim: "Work and pray!" He used to say: "A regent lives to work." It was said that he did the work of ten men. Nevertheless he made half an hour's meditation, heard Holy Mass, and said the Rosary every day. When he was at his country residence, he served Mass regularly and on Sundays and holydays explained the catechism to his servants.

Such a life and such activities inevitably aroused the hatred of the wicked. The German Freemasons challenged the Masons of America to move heaven and earth to destroy the Moreno government in Ecuador. The President knew of this. On August 4th, 1875, he wrote to a friend: "I know I shall be assassinated. I am happy to die for my faith. We shall meet again in Heaven." On August 6th, the first Friday of the month, the President heard Mass and received Communion. At noon he entered the government building, after a visit to the church on the opposite side of the street. As he went up the steps, he was attacked by three conspirators, who killed him with their swords and revolvers. In a few minutes it was all over. The only words Moreno spoke were: *"God will never die!"*

CHAPTER XXX

Good Works—Treasures Stored Up in Heaven

1. "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal" (Matth. VI, 19–20). With these words Jesus exhorts us to do good and thus gain the reward of Heaven. He that neglects to perform good works will not be saved. For Jesus said: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire" (Matth. VII, 19).

2. No commandment of God may be broken in the fulfilment of a good work. For example, a lie can never be a good work because it is forbidden by the Eighth Commandment. A work, to be good, must be performed with the right intention. St. Paul exhorts us: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. X, 31). God has created us in order that we should honour and serve Him. Therefore in all that we think and do, let our aim and motive be to glorify Him. This is what is meant by a "good intention." It is a good practice to renew our good intention often, but especially in the morning. This can be done in the words: "All for the greater honour and glory of God. To God alone I give my body and soul and my whole life, for His greater glory. O Jesus, give me grace to keep my good resolution!"

Or, more briefly: "All for the glory of God!"

We cannot do good works by ourselves alone, but only with

the help of God's grace. Jesus says: "Without me you can do nothing" (John XV, 5). Therefore, we must again and again ask God for His help and grace.

3. It is only when we possess sanctifying grace and are thus united with Jesus that the good works we perform have their full value and are meritorious for Heaven. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abideth in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches" (John XV, 4–5).

As often as we perform some good work while in the state of grace, grace and our merit for Heaven increases. Jesus promised that God would reward us for every drink of water we give for His sake to a thirsty disciple (Matth. X, 42). How rich we can become for all eternity by good works performed in the state of grace! St. Peter exhorts us: "Brethren, labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election" (2 Pet. I, 10). On the other hand, how lamentable is the fate of those who work and strive hard for years and years, yet cannot merit any reward in Heaven, either because they do not work for God's sake or are separated from Him by mortal sin.

But sinners, too, should perform good works, in order to obtain from God the grace of conversion.

4. By our good works we also give a good example to others and thus help them to gain Heaven. Those who have been influenced by our example, in turn influence others. Thus by performing good works, our activities spread far and wide and, in a sense, we become apostles. "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matth. V, 16).

Preferably, of course, we should do our works in secret, in order to be sure that they are not done to win the praise of men. Jesus says: "When thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thy alms may be in

secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee" (Matth. VI, 3–4).

What are good works?

Good works are works that are in conformity with the Commandments of God, and done for God's sake.

When do we gain merit in Heaven by our good works?

We gain merit in Heaven by our good works when we perform them in the state of sanctifying grace.

The Widow's Mite

Once, when Jesus was sitting in the Temple, He watched the people casting money into the contribution box. Many that were rich cast in large amounts. A poor widow came up and threw in two mites. Jesus called His disciples and said to them: "Amen I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living" (Mark XII, 43–44).

How Cardinal Manning Became a Total Abstainer

The famous English convert, Henry Edward Manning (d. 1892), took great pains to deter especially the poor people from the use of strong liquor because he saw how drunkenness destroyed their health and brought their families to misery. On one occasion he tried to persuade a labourer to give up the bad habit. The latter replied: "But, my Lord, you yourself drink, only better stuff than we can get." Manning was much impressed by this answer and exclaimed: "From this day on I will never drink another drop." And he kept his word. During the twenty years he lived after this happened, he was a total abstainer. His example worked wonders. Many imitated it and became total abstainers. When Manning died, there were in London 28,000 Catholic total abstainers. Thus the zealous Cardinal, by his example, saved thousands of families from misery and ruin. He might doubtless have indulged in spirituous drink without danger of intemperance; but there were others who were exposed to this danger, and he wanted to help them by his example.

CHAPTER XXXI

What Particular Good Works We Should Practice

1. Above all we must do the good works expressly prescribed by the Commandments of God and those of the Church, for example, faith, charity, the sanctification of the Sunday, obedience, etc.

Labour belongs to the works commanded by God. It was a duty even in Paradise, for before the fall our First Parents had to cultivate the garden. After their fall hard labour became partly a burden and a penance. God said: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. III, 19). On Mount Sinai God repeated the precept, for He introduced the third of the Ten Commandments with the words: "Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works; but on the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God" (Ex. XX, 9). Jesus Himself, the Son of God, did the most strenuous manual work until His thirtieth year, and then for three years hard mental work. Through St. Paul He teaches us that "He who will not work, let him not eat" (2 Thess. III, 10).

God wills that we should labour because it is useful for us, for labour procures us our livelihood, keeps the body healthy, protects us from sin, and perfects our faculties. Moreover, everyone who works serves his neighbours individually and as a whole body, *i. e.,* society. Work which we do thoughtfully and for God's sake makes us happy and brings an eternal reward.

Besides these general duties there are the duties of our state in life, varying for different people, children, parents, the married, pupils, teachers, labourers, employers, officials, etc.

Works especially pleasing to God, according to Holy Scripture, are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. "Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold" (Tob. XII, 8). By prayer may be understood all works of piety; by fasting, all penances and acts of self-denial; by almsgiving, the corporeal and spiritual works of mercy. The works of mercy can be practised especially in charitable societies, such as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

2. An exceptionally good work is that of the foreign missions. Shortly before His Ascension, Jesus enjoined His Apostles to convert the world, saying: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matth. XXVIII, 18–20). The Catholic Church obeys this injunction faithfully. Thousands of priests, sent forth by her, are engaged converting heathen to Christ. These priests are called "missionaries," that is, messengers. Many die of the hardships or the bad climate; others are murdered by the pagans. But new missionaries are constantly going out. The priests are accompanied by Brothers, who do the housekeeping for the missionaries, build dwellings, churches and schools for them, instruct children and adults in religion, and also in agriculture and carpentry. The missionaries train natives to be what are called "catechists," who instruct the pagans living in distant villages. In many countries the missionaries even educate the natives to become priests. They are also helped by many thousands of nuns, called "mission Sisters." These educate in special institutions children who are given to them by the pagans or who are forsaken by their parents; they nurse the sick, even lepers, and by such works of mercy influence the pagans, bringing them into the Christian fold. They also instruct the pagan women.

But much money is needed for all this. This must be sup-

plied for the most part from Christian countries, since the Christians in pagan countries are usually poor. Often through lack of funds the missionaries cannot keep as many catechists as are necessary and are therefore unable to send instructors to villages where the faith is desired. Through want of means the missionaries often have to refuse children offered them by the pagans to be educated; sometimes they must even abandon orphans whom they have already adopted. The work of the missionary has been made much more difficult since the World War. Since the missionaries, in the work God has appointed them to do, depend on our help, it is our sacred duty to assist them as much as we can. St. John writes: "For his name they went out, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we may be fellow helpers of the truth" (3 John 7–8). The pagan missions can be helped best by joining the Catholic mission societies, such as, for example, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Sodality of St. Peter Claver, the Holy Childhood of Jesus, and by supporting the different mission houses.

We should help the missions also by our prayers. The most glorious sacrifice of all is made by those who dedicate their whole life to the mission cause. To such as these Jesus says: "Everyone that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting" (Matth. XIX, 29).

We should also support and read the various periodicals devoted to the promotion of the mission cause.

What good works must we do above all others?

We must above all keep the Commandments and fulfil the duties of our station in life.

St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of India

The greatest missionary the Church has had since the time of the Apostles was St. Francis Xavier. He came of a distinguished

Spanish family and was a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris. While in that city, he met St. Ignatius Loyola, who persuaded him to devote himself to God. Both men, together with a few friends, founded the Society of Jesus. Soon after, the King of Portugal asked St. Ignatius, who was the superior of the Society, to send missionaries to the Portuguese possessions in East India. St. Ignatius sent Francis Xavier, who joyfully obeyed and embarked for Goa, the chief town of the Portuguese possessions. The journey lasted thirteen months.

Christianity had already been brought to Goa by former missionaries, and a great many European Christians were living there, but they were demoralized and by their immoral lives brought the religion of Christ into disrepute among the pagans. Therefore Francis Xavier first of all set about converting the Christians who had fallen away. Every morning he visited the sick in the hospitals, comforted them, and sought to bring them back to the practice of their faith. He then went through the streets of the town, ringing a little bell to summon the children to the church, where he taught them the Christian religion. The children grew to love the Saint and loved to tell about him at home. Soon the parents also came to instructions, and Francis Xavier appealed so impressively to them that soon almost all led Christian lives again. Thus Goa was entirely transformed.

Now Francis devoted himself to the pagans, first in the most southerly part of India, then on the west coast, and afterwards in the numerous islands between India and Japan as well as Malacca. Everywhere his sermons were very successful. People realized his good intentions and the hard life he led in his endeavour to save souls. God also gave him the power to work miracles. Thus he converted many thousands.

In his letters to Europe Francis constantly begged for fellow workers. Once he wrote: "There are many here who are not Christians simply because there is no one to preach the Gospel to them. Often in spirit I visit the universities of Europe, especially that of Paris, and lift up my voice crying out to those who have more science than charity: Alas, if you but knew what hosts of souls are lost through your fault and go to hell for all eternity!" [1]

[1] This does not mean that all pagans are damned. But many pagans live in mortal sin and thus go to eternal ruin; if missionaries came to them, they might be converted and saved.

Francis even penetrated to Japan. The journey to that country, owing to a stormy sea, was so dangerous that it was considered fortunate if two out of three ships arrived safely. The only way Francis could make this journey was in the boat of a dreaded pirate. Several times the sailors threatened to throw the Saint overboard because they attributed all their mishaps to him. In Japan thousands were converted by his preaching; even pagan bonzes (priests) and princes were baptized. But the saint was not satisfied. He wanted to gain for Christ the largest empire in the world—China. Franciscan Fathers had already introduced Chistianity into China in the thirteenth century; but the Christian congregations were afterwards destroyed by persecutions. On his way to China Francis fell ill on the island of Sancian, near the coast of China. He died there in 1552, almost entirely abandoned. But he did not lose courage. His last words were: "In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted. Let me not be confounded for ever!" Though only forty-six years of age, he was worn out by his labours.

His body was taken to Malacca and from there to Goa. For 300 years the body remained almost entirely uncorrupted. Thus God glorified his faithful servant on earth and manifested the great glory that is His in Heaven. St. Francis is held in great veneration by the Church. A magnificent memorial was erected to him in a church in Goa, which is visited by numerous pilgrims. His feast is kept on the 3rd of December.

CHAPTER XXXII

The Value of the Christian Virtues

1. If we often perform works of mercy, they become a habit, second nature, as it were, and we acquire the virtue of mercy. It is similar with other good works; by constant practice they become virtues. Then again and again good works result from virtues. They are a spiritual capital yielding a large interest. At Baptism God has planted in our hearts the seed, as it were, of all Christian virtues. We must let this seed grow and develop by practising those virtues. God will help us by His grace, if we ask Him constantly. We must co-operate with that grace.

A powerful stimulus to virtue is the example of Jesus Christ and of His Saints. Therefore it is extremely important for us to familiarize ourselves with the life of Christ and the lives of the Saints. We can best do this by meditating on the Gospels, reading other approved accounts of the life of Christ, such as Fillion's (Herder, 3 vols.), and by studying the lives of the Saints.

2. The Commandments of God oblige us to cultivate many virtues. Of special importance are the virtues which are opposed to the seven capital sins, namely, humility, generosity, chastity, good-will, temperance, patience, and zeal in doing good. Everyone should practise particularly that virtue in which he is most wanting.

All virtues must be regulated by *prudence,* so that each one may be practised at the right time and in the right manner, without exaggeration. Prudence alone can lead us, by cool deliberation and the help of divine grace, to steer the right

course in the many difficult problems that beset us. Holy Scripture says: "Do thou nothing without counsel, and thou shalt not repent when thou hast done" (Ecclus. XXXII, 24). All wisdom is from God. Jesus exhorts us to "be as simple as the dove and as wise as the serpent" (Matth. XII, 42).

3. The greatest virtues are the *three theological virtues,* faith, hope, and charity. They are called theological because they are directed entirely towards God and unite us most closely with Him. God demands these virtues from us more than any others, and all the other Christian virtues depend on faith, hope, and charity. Therefore we must constantly practise the theological virtues. We can do this every day by speaking to God from our hearts at our morning prayer: "O my God, I believe in Thee, because Thou hast revealed Thyself to us and Thou art Truth itself. I hope in Thee, because Thou art my almighty, infinitely kind and merciful Father and Saviour, and hast promised to hear my prayers, to help me, and to save me. I love Thee with my whole heart and above all else, because Thou art infinitely good and beautiful and demandest that I should love Thee in return. I will always love Thee, O my Father, serve Thee with all my strength, and remain faithful to Thee until death." If we are tempted to doubt, we should awaken our faith. If we are tempted to be despondent or to despair, we should kindle hope in our hearts. If we are tempted to be unfaithful to God by any sin, we should elicit an act of love for God.

But most of all it is necessary to awaken within us the three theological virtues at the hour of death, that we may not be separated from God on the threshold of eternity. When dying, we can awaken these virtues by fervently kissing a crucifix.

In no sense is it enough that we should elicit acts of the three theological virtues by word of mouth only; we must also *practise* them, especially by courageously professing our faith, bearing adversities with fortitude, and faithfully fulfilling the

will of God. Regarding these virtues, Jesus has said: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved" (Mark XVI, 16). "Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven" (Matth. V, 12). "If anyone love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (John XIV, 23).

St. Paul says: "And now [in this life] there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity" (1 Cor. XIII, 13).

Which are the three theological virtues?

The three theological virtues are: faith, hope, and charity.

When especially must we awaken within us the three theological virtues?

We must awaken within us the three theological virtues especially when we are tempted to sin, or have sinned, against any of these virtues, and when we are in danger of death.

The Meekness of St. Francis de Sales

As a rule even the Saints did not find it an easy matter to acquire virtues; on the contrary, it was only by taking great pains and by practising self-denial that they attained them.

St. Francis de Sales was by nature very much inclined to anger. He did not yield to this impulse, but wrestled with it. In the end he succeeded in gaining perfect control of himself and remained amiable and kind even when he was grossly insulted.

Once, at the request of the Duke of Savoy, he went to Chablais, the district south of Lake Geneva, to bring the people of that country back to the true faith, almost all of them having embraced the heresy of Calvin. The governor offered him the protection of a guard, but Francis refused the offer. The Calvinists closed their doors to him, gave him neither food nor shelter, and threatened him with death. But Francis bore it all with such patience and approached his adversaries with such love, that after eight months they began to listen to his sermons. Later he obtained the help

of two other priests, and after two years had led 25,000 souls back to the Catholic faith.

Soon after Francis became Bishop of Geneva. Once a relative imagined himself to have been insulted by some act of the Saint's, although Francis had not the slightest suspicion of this. The former appeared one day in the courtyard of the Bishop's residence (at Annecy; Francis could not reside at Geneva because it was entirely in the hands of the Calvinists) with a pack of hounds and a company of hunters, who made a most appalling noise. The leader forced his way into the Bishop's room and overwhelmed him with abuse. Francis remained quiet and made no comment on his disgraceful behaviour. His meekness made the nobleman still more furious. At last he grew tired of speaking with none to answer him, and hurried away with parting threats. A clergyman who had witnessed the whole scene now asked Francis: "Right Reverend Father, why did you not at least reprove this impudent fellow by speaking a few earnest, impressive words to him?" Francis replied: "I have a compact with my tongue that it shall remain silent as long as I feel angry and that it shall make no reply to any words that might stir me to anger. And certainly it would not have been good to provoke the poor man to further anger by attempting to explain his error to him. After a little quiet reflection he will recover his reason and repent of his fault." Indeed a few days later the transgressor came back and, with tears in his eyes, begged the Bishop's pardon and thanked him for the gentleness he had shown when he was so abusive; for, he admitted, he would have murdered anyone who had attempted to remonstrate with him at the time."

Thus Francis by his meekness disarmed all his opponents. People used to say: "O God, if the Bishop is so kind, how kind must *Thou* be!" He won altogether 72,000 heretics over to the Catholic Church. Through his books, especially the "Introduction to a Devout Life," his influence for good still continues.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Necessity of Striving for Perfection

1. God is not pleased with the self-satisfied. He wants us to try always to become better. Jesus exhorts us: "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matth. V, 48).

Why does Jesus demand that we should strive after perfection? God is infinitely great, infinitely glorious, and infinitely good. Therefore we can never say that we love Him enough or serve Him worthily. He always deserves more love and better service. Further, our happiness in Heaven will be the greater, the more faithfully we have served God here on earth. Finally, if we do not continue to strive and make progress, it is certain that we shall go backwards and perhaps lose our souls for all eternity.

2. In what does perfection consist? It consists in fulfilling perfectly the chief commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind." Therefore we must strive to love God always more and more. And our love must be manifested by deeds, for Jesus has said: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (John XIV, 21). The more we love God and the more zealously we fulfil His commandments, the nearer we approach perfection.

The first step in attaining perfection is to consider nothing in the world equal to God nor to prefer anything to Him, and not to offend God grievously, however great the temptation. The second step is to take pains to please God by good

works and virtues, as Jesus has taught us to do by word and example. The third step is to have God before our minds always and to direct all our thoughts and works to Him.

3. The most important means to Christian perfection are: To learn to know God, His will and His word, better and better. This is done by listening attentively to religious instructions and sermons, by thoughtfully reading pious books, especially works about religion, Bible history, the Gospels, the "Introduction to a Devout Life" by St. Francis de Sales, the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis, and others. We should often meditate on the life and teaching of the Saviour, and govern our conduct accordingly. We should also endeavour to become acquainted with the lives of the Saints and take them for our models. And because we are nothing by ourselves, we must pray unceasingly and be zealous in receiving the Sacraments, thus procuring God's grace and help. All this requires toil and self-denial. Jesus demands self-denial from all His followers: **"He that will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"** (Matth. XVI, 24).

We hear a great deal nowadays about the progress mankind is making in science and art, in politics and social reform. But the greatest and best progress is the progress in virtue, for without this all else has little value. Progress in virtue and striving after Christian perfection make us free and joyous, and lead us to the highest goal—union with God in life and after death. "But the path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forwards and increaseth even to perfect day" (Prov. IV, 18).

St. Teresa

The three steps in striving after Christian perfection are clearly shown in the life of St. Teresa.

Teresa was born in 1515 at Avila, Spain. Her parents were pious Christians of noble descent. When only seven years old, Teresa used to read the lives of the Saints. This filled her with such a

desire for the joys of Heaven that she and her brother, who was nearly her own age, resolved to go to the Orient to die for the faith. The two children actually set out, but they were soon discovered and taken back home. When she was about twelve, Teresa secretly began to read novels. She grew less pious, took pleasure in dress, and became frivolous and coquettish. At the age of fourteen she formed a friendship with a relative who was very worldly. She drew away further from God and was almost in danger of committing mortal sin. Her father noticed the danger and, since he could not well forbid this relative the house, he sent Teresa to a convent. There her mind turned back to God. At this time God visited her with a severe illness, from which she recovered in the paternal home. She afterwards visited her uncle, a very pious man, and he persuaded. her to read spiritual books. Among these the letters of St. Jerome inspired her to such an extent that she resolved to consecrate herself to the Lord by entering a convent. She joined the Carmelite nuns in Avila.

At first she was full of zeal. But visitors to the convent were attracted by her wit and amiability and she spent much of her time with them. This distracted her mind and she lost all joy in prayer. For some time she abandoned the mental prayer which is prescribed for all religious; she did this because she considered herself unworthy. She hovered between love of God and love of the world. In the account of her life which she wrote at the command of her confessor, she says: "I spent nearly twenty years on a storm-tossed sea. My lapses were great; I only half recovered from them, and soon fell again. I knew neither the sweetness felt in the service of the Lord, nor the joy people find in the world. When I thought of the pleasures of the world my soul was distressed by the recollection of my duty to God; and when I was with God in prayer, I was again importuned by all these worldly thoughts. . . . It was a wearisome struggle." She always pictures herself in the most unfavourable light and refers to her faults in the strongest terms; but for a time she really did give herself up to a certain lukewarmness in regard to prayer. This put her in danger of becoming unfaithful to God. Later God showed her in an apparition the place she would occupy in hell should she persist in her lukewarmness, and especially if she did not renounce her friendship with a cousin of hers.

At this dangerous period of her life she began to give herself up to meditation on the Passion of the Saviour; and she was quite

transformed by reading the "Confessions" of St. Augustine. Now at last she began to love God truly, with her whole soul and with all her strength; she gave herself to Him unreservedly, and sought her happiness in Him alone. She had now reached the third step on the way to perfection. She even made the unprecedented vow never to commit the slightest venial sin and in all things to do only what seemed to her most perfect and most pleasing to God. She now made great progress in all the virtues.

But Teresa was not satisfied with belonging to God herself; she wished to lead others to the same degree of perfection. The Carmelite Order, to which she belonged, had lost a good deal of its original rigour and zeal. With the consent of the Church authorities, Teresa now set about reforming the Order, that is, leading it back to its pristine fervour; and not only the convents, but also the monasteries. With this end in view, she founded in the course of twenty years, seventeen convents for nuns and fifteen monasteries for monks, according to the original strict rule of the Carmelite Order. In carrying out this reform, she met with strong opposition. But her one joy was to suffer for God. She used to pray: "O Lord, to suffer or to die for Thee—this is all I ask."

Since she had given herself so completely to God, she was overwhelmed by Him with spiritual consolations. She writes: "What words could express the inner feelings of a soul to whom God has disclosed His mysteries and wonders! These are delights so far above earthly joys that the pleasures of life can only fill us with distaste and repugnance. And yet the happiness God imparts to us here on earth is but a drop in the ocean of happiness that awaits us above."

When, at the age of sixty-seven, Teresa felt the approach of death, she asked for the Sacraments. As soon as she saw the Holy Viaticum, her countenance became radiant. Kneeling on her prie-dieu, her eyes raised to her Saviour, she cried: "O my Lord and well beloved Spouse! The long wished for hour has arrived. The time has come when we shall see each other face to face, O my Saviour and my only lover, it is time for me to go to Thee. It is time I should depart from this life." After receiving Extreme Unction, she kept her eyes fixed on the crucifix and was heard praying, again and again, as long as she could speak: "O my God, Thou wilt not despise the heart that has ever humbled itself before Thee." Thus she died. In the year 1760 her coffin was opened for the last time. Her body was still uncorrupted and flexible, and

gave forth a wondrous perfume, as it did directly after her death.

Teresa is one of the greatest Saints of the Church. As a writer she ranks with the great doctors, St. Augustine and others; and in beauty of style her works rank with the most brilliant in Spanish literature. The Church commemorates her feast on the 15th of October.

CHAPTER XXXIV

The Evangelical Counsels—Convents and Religious Orders

There are certain means for attaining perfection which are not intended for all and are not commanded, but only recommended, in the Gospel.

1. One day a young man came to Jesus and asked him: "Good Master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?" Jesus answered: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The young man asked: "Which?" And Jesus named certain of the commandments of God. The young man then said: "All these have I kept from my youth, what is yet wanting to me?" Jesus looked at him and was pleased. "If thou wilt be perfect," He said, "go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man had heard this, "he went away sad; for he had great possessions" (Matth. XIX, 16–22).

2. Here we see the Saviour recommending three things: first, voluntary poverty, because earthly possessions so easily turn the heart away from God. Second, perpetual virginity or perfect chastity, for if the young man had joined the followers of Jesus, he would have had to renounce matrimony. A short time previously Jesus had recommended perpetual virginity when He said: "There are eunuchs . . . who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take, let him take it" (Matth. XIX, 12). St. Paul tells us why Jesus gave this advice: "He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is

with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. VII, 32–34).

Third, the youth was asked to renounce his independence, placing himself entirely under the guidance of Jesus and practising constant obedience. He that practises such constant obedience under a spiritual superior and keeps to a definite order of life, will be preserved from many faults, into which he would otherwise be led by self-love.

These three virtues are called the Evangelical Counsels because they are only recommended, not commanded, and because we learn about them in the Gospel. Jesus Himself has given us the most beautiful example of these, as well as of all the other virtues.

3. From the earliest days the Evangelical Counsels have been accepted in the Catholic Church. Many, by taking vows, place themselves under an obligation to follow these counsels. Such persons usually live together with others, who have made the same vows, in a convent or monastery, according to a definite rule. Convents which follow one and the same rule form an Order or Congregation (a society similar to an Order). The rules of the different Orders and Congregations (*e. g.*, the Benedictine Order, the Society of Jesus, the Sisters of Charity) have been drawn up for the most part by saints.

To live a religious life a special vocation from God is necessary. This is manifested by interior disposition and by such exterior circumstances as make it possible to enter an Order. This vocation is a great grace and brings much happiness, for it means that God invites a soul to give itself to Him entirely. To such a soul Jesus has promised: "Everyone that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or

wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting" (Matth. XIX, 29). Therefore a call from God should be joyfully followed and the friends of the one who receives such a call should not selfishly stand in his way.

What are the Evangelical Counsels?

The Evangelical Counsels are: (1) voluntary poverty; (2) perpetual chastity; (3) entire obedience to a spiritual superior.

The Religious Orders

The chief object of the religious life is to assist those who embrace it in their efforts to attain Christian perfection and eternal salvation. But the religious Orders draw down great blessings, not only on their members, but on the whole world, by their prayers and their good example in virtue and self-denial, and most Orders also by their exterior activities. Many occupy themselves with teaching and education. Others devote themselves to the care of the sick, and as nurses the members of these Orders are, as a rule, the most self-sacrificing in peace time as well as in war. Other Orders devote themselves to preaching, especially of missions, and thereby restore peace to the hearts of innumerable sinners. Many Orders work on the foreign missions, and thousands of religious have sacrificed their lives while engaged in this arduous work.

What has been said regarding the wealth of religious Orders is for the most part untrue. Most of them are actually poor. After the World War in Europe many religious, especially nuns, succumbed to famine. The few religious houses that are rich gained their wealth in a perfectly legitimate way and use it mostly for the common good, *e. g.,* for maintaining churches, parishes or schools. But all, even the poorest housed, practise great charity towards the poor. The Orders are hated and persecuted by the enemies of the Church because they are an exceedingly valuable, nay indispensable support of the true faith. Some newspapers love to speak of the supposed wealth of the monasteries. Their motive is to divert attention from certain persons and corporations who possess far more money than all the Catholic monasteries and churches combined and who have not acquired their wealth so honestly nor do they use it so charitably as the religious Orders.

PART III

HOW WE ARE SANCTIFIED BY THE SACRAMENTS

CHAPTER I

The Sacraments and Their Effects

Our own strength is not sufficient to enable us to persevere on the road to Heaven. We have constant need of God's grace, of which, as we have already noted, there are two kinds. For, in order to be able to enter into eternal life we must possess a higher, supernatural, spiritual life even here on earth, that is, sanctifying grace; and we cannot observe the Commandments in a way pleasing to God unless He helps us with His actual grace. Now, what are the means by which we can obtain grace? This will be the subject of the third and fourth parts of this book.

1. Divine grace is invisible. Yet at certain times God desires to impart it to us in a visible manner, in order that we may be more clearly conscious of it. In Baptism, for example, the soul is cleansed from all sins. With this cleansing of the soul God has combined an ablution of the body with water and certain words spoken while the act of washing is performed. The ablution and the words spoken indicate that the soul is cleansed, and they actually effect the cleansing and sanctifying. Such outward signs, which bring us the grace of God, are called Sacraments (that is, holy and mysterious things). Almighty God alone can give to outward signs the power to convey inward grace. Therefore all the Sacraments were instituted by God, *i. e.*, by Jesus Christ.

Because we have need of special graces in the various situations of life, Jesus Christ instituted not one, but seven Sacraments.

The Seven Sacraments are: (1) Baptism; (2) Confirmation; (3) the Holy Eucharist, (4) Penance; (5) Extreme Unction; (6) Holy Orders; (7) Matrimony.

2. The Sacraments are the holiest things and the choicest blessing we have on earth. They procure for us the greatest wealth and happiness, namely, grace, the love and help of God, peace of mind, and eternal salvation. Through the Sacraments we obtain both kinds of grace in the highest degree. Sanctifying grace is imparted to us, or if we already possess it, it is increased within us, and actual graces are bestowed upon us. All the blessings that Jesus Christ has merited for us through His death on the Cross are imparted to us through the Sacraments. Hence we cannot prize them too highly nor thank God for them too fervently.

3. But we do not obtain help from the Sacraments unless we receive them worthily. A certain preparation is necessary for this. Those that do not possess sanctifying grace, need Baptism only, or if they are already baptized, the Sacrament of Penance. The preparation for these Sacraments—with the exception of Baptism for infants—consists chiefly in sincere sorrow for one's sins and an earnest resolution to amend one's life. The other five Sacraments (namely Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony) may only be received by persons already in the state of sanctifying grace. Therefore the most important preparation for these Sacraments consists in being in the state of sanctifying grace. Whoever receives the Sacraments without this necessary preparation, receives them unworthily and commits a grievous sacrilege.

4. Some Sacraments impress an indelible mark on the soul and raise it to a new state for all time. Thus Baptism makes us Christians for ever, Confirmation makes us soldiers of Christ for ever, the Sacrament of Holy Orders makes those who receive it priests for ever. He who has worthily received one of these

Sacraments will receive throughout life the special graces necessary for a Christian, a soldier of Christ, or a priest. Therefore it would be useless to receive one of these Sacraments more than once. To attempt to do so, would be invalid and a grievous sin. The remaining Sacraments can be received repeatedly under certain conditions. The Sacrament of Penance and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist may be received again and again, and it is the earnest wish of the Church that we should receive them frequently.

What is a Sacrament?

A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give us grace.

CHAPTER II

The Effects of Baptism

1. When we are baptized, we share in the Redemption which Jesus Christ has brought us. After He had completed the work of the Redemption, He commanded His Apostles and their successors to "go forth and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," assuring men that "he that believeth shall be saved" (Matth. XXVIII, 19; Mark XVI, 16.)

2. The Catholic Church explains this commission. She teaches that Baptism consists in pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized (no other fluid may be used except water in its natural state), that the water must be sprinkled on the skin, and not merely on the hair, and must flow over the skin. While the water is being poured,—not before or afterwards,—the minister of the Sacrament must utter the words: *"I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

3. By order of Jesus Christ the pouring of water on the head of the person to be baptized with the words pronounced has the following effects: The Holy Ghost enters the soul of the person baptized, fills it with sanctifying grace, purifies it from all sin, and makes it a glorious image of God. God the Father adopts the baptized person as His child and makes him an heir of Heaven. Therefore St. Paul announces to those baptized: "You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. VI, 11). He that is baptized is a Christian for ever,

that is, he belongs for ever to Christ. Even though he would fall away from the Christian religion, it is indelibly inscribed on his soul that he belongs to Christ. Moreover he belongs to the great family of Christ, the Catholic Church, and has a claim to her blessings, especially to the Sacraments. But no one who is not baptized can receive any of the other Sacraments.

God will always help those who are baptized to lead a Christian life.

At Baptism such a profound change takes place in the human soul that the baptized person is, as it were, reborn; he is born again as a child of God.

Let us be duly grateful for these priceless graces.

4. Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation. We can deduce this proposition from the words of Christ: "He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved." According to these words, two things are necessary for salvation in the case of an adult: faith,—not a dead faith, but a living faith according to which his whole life is ordered,—and Baptism. But even little children cannot be saved without Baptism, for Jesus said to Nicodemus: **"Amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"** (John III, 5). The reason is that we have inherited original sin from our First Parents and hence "were by nature children of wrath" (Eph. II, 3).

Infants who die without Baptism will not have to suffer in the next life, because they have not committed any sin. It is probable that they will enjoy a certain degree of happiness; but they will be for ever excluded from Heaven. Therefore, Christian parents whom God has blessed with children should take great care that their children do not die unbaptized. It is the desire of the Church that Baptism should not be postponed longer than two days after birth.

5. Because Baptism is so necessary, any person can give it.

But lay-persons (that is, those who are not in Holy Orders) may administer Baptism only in case of necessity, that is, when there is danger that the child will die without being baptized. If possible, one or two witnesses should be present during the administration of Baptism in case of necessity. Even though a child has been baptized by a lay-person, he must, if he survives, be afterwards brought to a priest. The priest says the prescribed prayers over the child and, should there be any doubt concerning the validity of the Baptism, he will rebaptize the child conditionally.

6. If any person cannot receive Baptism, yet loves God, is sorry for his sins, and has the intention to do everything that God requires of him, and if he dies in this disposition, his desire will be accepted in the place of Baptism; he receives the Baptism of desire. For Jesus has said: "If anyone love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (John XIV, 23). It is probable that many pagans are saved through the Baptism of desire.

Those too will be saved who, though not yet baptized, repent of their sins and lay down their lives for Jesus Christ; they receive the "Baptism of blood." For Jesus has said: "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it" (Matth. X, 39).

How is baptism given?

Baptism is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized and at the same time pronouncing the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

What is the effect of Baptism on the soul?

Baptism confers sanctifying grace and frees the soul from all sin; it makes us Christians and members of the Catholic Church.

Who may baptize validly?

Any person can baptize validly; but a lay person should not baptize except in case of necessity.

The Baptism of Jesus and Our Baptism

Before Jesus began His public life, God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Him. John preached by the River Jordan and exhorted those who came in large numbers to hear him, to do penance. Many confessed their sins and were baptized by John, thus expressing their desire to be washed and cleansed from sin. That is why John was called "the Baptist." But he expressly told them that the Baptism he gave them could not really efface their sins, but that the Redeemer would bring them the true Baptism.

One day Jesus came to the Jordan and asked John to baptize Him. John, filled with reverence and awe, said: "I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me?" But Jesus answered: "Suffer it to be so now." Then John obeyed. Jesus entered the river, and John poured water on His head.

When Jesus had been baptized, He came out of the river and prayed. Then Heaven opened, the Holy Ghost descended and came upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice from Heaven cried: "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This was a symbol of what happens to the soul at Baptism. Heaven also opened when we were baptized; the Holy Ghost descended into our souls and brought us sanctifying grace by which original sin was effaced (when adults are baptized, their personal sins, too, are effaced), and our souls became glorious and radiant in the eyes of God. But the Holy Ghost did not come to us for a moment only; He made our bodies His temple and remained in us. When God the Father saw our souls purified and radiant with His image, He cried out from Heaven: This is my well-beloved child, in whom I am well pleased. Because we were now children of God, Heaven was open to us, we received a claim to eternal beatitude and became heirs of the celestial Kingdom. If we had died soon after Baptism, our souls would immediately have entered Heaven.

What God has given us in Baptism is a thousand times more precious than all the riches of this world. Let us often thank Him for this, especially on the anniversary of our Baptism.

CHAPTER III

How Solemn Baptism Is Conferred

The Church has surrounded Baptism with certain prayers and ceremonies calculated to show us how great and holy this Sacrament is. So also with the other Sacraments.

1. The person to be baptized is attended by a godfather or a godmother, or by both. These (the so-called sponsors) undertake to answer to the Catholic Church for the conduct of him who is baptized; they also assume the duty of seeing to it that he is brought up in the Christian religion. Therefore the sponsors should themselves be good practical Catholics. Non-Catholics cannot act as sponsors. The godparents contract a spiritual relationship with the godchild. The child should also have a guardian and intercessor in Heaven, whom he can keep before him as a model, and should, therefore, be given the name of a saint.

2. As a rule Baptism is conferred in church. But the first prayers and ceremonies take place in an anteroom of the church, showing that the person to be baptized does not yet belong to the Kingdom of God. As a sign that the evil spirit shall depart from the infant, the priest breathes three times in his face, and because he henceforth belongs to Jesus, the priest makes the sign of the cross on his forehead and breast. He then places blessed salt in his mouth. This indicates that the person baptized shall be protected from the corruption of sin and shall have a taste of the things of Heaven. Then in the name of the Three Divine Persons, the priest solemnly commands Satan to quit the *baptizandus,* and as a sign that the Church takes him

under her protection, he first lays his hand on the child, then the end of the stole, the vestment of his office, and conducts him into the church.

3. In the church, generally beside the baptismal font, the priest touches the ear and the nose of the infant, saying at the same time: "Ephphata," that is, "Be opened to the sweet perfume!" The ear shall be opened to the Word of God, which shall be to him as a divine perfume, to be joyfully inhaled.

Then in the name of the infant the godparents renounce the devil and all his works and pomps. The infant renounces the pomps of the devil, that is, he promises not to become blinded by fame, riches or pomps, and not to become alienated from God. Then the priest anoints him with the baptismal oil on the breast, to fortify him in his struggles against the devil, and between the shoulders, to fortify him in bearing his cross after Christ. The baptismal oil is blessed by the bishop every year on Holy Thursday. The godparents, in the child's name, make a profession of faith in the Three Divine Persons and in the Catholic Church.

4. Then the priest gives the infant a name chosen by the parents and godparents, saying: "N——, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." While uttering these words, he pours the baptismal water three times on the head in the form of a cross. (It is sufficient for the validity of Baptism to pour the water on the head once, and the form of a cross is not necessary.)

5. After Baptism the priest anoints the infant on the crown of the head with chrism, as a sign of the high dignity that has been conferred on him. The priest also spreads a white robe over the infant and exhorts him to bring the white robe of his soul unstained before the judgment-seat of Christ. He hands the infant (the godfather) a lighted taper, a symbol of the torch of charity and zeal in good works, which he is to keep

alight in his heart. Thus he shall keep himself constantly prepared for the moment when the Saviour will come to lead him to the divine marriage feast.

Finally the name of the child and his parents' names are entered in the baptismal register.

In holy Baptism a covenant of grace was made by us with God. The vow made by our godparents on our behalf is as binding as if we had pronounced it with our own lips. Even if no promise had been made, it would still be binding on us. We should often renew our baptismal vows, especially on our birthday and the anniversary of Baptism.

What is the duty the sponsors assume?

The sponsors assume the duty of seeing to it that their godchild is brought up in the Catholic religion.

Renewal of the Baptismal Vows

O great, all-holy God! With joy and gladness, and of my own free will, I renew the promise my godparents once made for me at holy Baptism. I renounce the devil and all his works and pomps. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, who was born and suffered for us. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. With God's grace I will live and die in this holy Catholic faith. Amen.

The Wedding Garment

The white robe given to the infant at Baptism is to remind us of the parable of the king who gave a feast to celebrate the marriage of his son. He sent his servants to invite numerous guests. According to an Eastern custom, a festive robe was given to each guest as he entered the hall. Now when the hall was filled, the king came to observe the guests. He saw one that had no wedding garment and said to him: "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" The guest was silent. Then the king said to his servants: "Bind his hands and his feet, and cast

him into exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matth. XXII, 2 sqq.).

By the wedding feast is to be understood the eternal beatitude of Heaven. The wedding garment is sanctifying grace, given us by God at Baptism. If the Great King finds any person without a wedding garment at the judgment, he will order that person to be cast into hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Therefore the priest exhorts the *baptizandus*: "Receive this white garment and bring it unstained before the judgment-seat of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have everlasting life."

Do you still possess this celestial wedding garment?

CHAPTER IV

The Sacrament of Penance and Its Effects

1. One of the greatest gifts which the Saviour has bestowed on us is the Sacrament of Penance. Jesus instituted this Sacrament when He was with His Apostles after the Resurrection and said to them: **"Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained"** (John XX, 22–23).

This command was intended not only for the Apostles, but also for their successors, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church.

2. Therefore the priest, acting in God's place, can forgive sins. But he may not forgive all sins; in the case of some he must "retain" them. He may forgive the sins only when the penitent is truly converted, that is, repents of his sins and is resolved to apply all the means necessary to correct his faults, and also to make restitution for the wrong he has done. The priest can judge whether the penitent is truly reconciled to God only if the penitent reveals his inner self to him, that is, if he confesses at least his mortal sins. In order to be able to do this in the right way, the penitent must first examine his conscience.

3. When the penitent has confessed his sins, the priest, if he considers him worthy, will give him absolution. If he is truly repentent, God Himself, through the mouth of the priest, absolves him.

Through the priestly *absolution,* God forgives the penitent all the mortal sins he has committed, even those which, through no fault of his, he has forgotten to confess; and also as many

of the venial sins as the penitent repents and confesses. The eternal punishment, that is, the punishment of eternal damnation, is entirely remitted by God through the absolution. The temporal punishment of sin, that is, the punishment which lasts only for a time, and which must be expiated either in this life or in Purgatory, is at least partially remitted. Further, through the absolution, God again bestows or increases sanctifying grace and imparts actual grace to help the penitent to lead a holy life.

4. After receiving absolution the penitent has to perform the penance imposed on him by the priest.

The forgiveness of sins by the priest, together with all that the penitent must do to obtain it, is called the Sacrament of Penance.

In order to be able to examine our conscience well, to have sorrow for our sins, to confess them, and to correct our faults, we should, therefore, begin by asking the help of the Holy Ghost. We can do this in the following words:

"O Holy Ghost, come to my aid, that I may know my sins, be truly sorry for them, confess them and amend my life."

As often as we receive the Sacrament of Penance, we cleanse our souls in the Blood of Jesus Christ and are saved from eternal damnation. God bestows upon us a happiness and peace which the world cannot give.

What does God forgive us and what does He impart to us in confession?

In confession God forgives us our sins and the punishment due to them; He imparts to us sanctifying grace and assists us to lead a holy life.

What must we do before confession?

Before confession we must examine our conscience and excite ourselves to contrition and a firm purpose of amendment.

How the penitent should become reconciled to God and how merciful God is to the contrite sinner, is shown in the

Parable of the Prodigal Son

One day Jesus said to his disciples: "A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country: and there wasted his substance, living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And returning to himself, he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: I am not worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion and running to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son. And the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry" **(Luke XV, 11–24).**

CHAPTER V

Examination of Conscience

Before we receive the Sacrament of Penance, we must first of all call upon the Holy Ghost for help and examine our conscience.

1. In examining our conscience a definite order should be observed.

First we should review our last confession, when we made it, and whether it was valid. It was invalid if we had no contrition for our sins or did not form an earnest resolution to amend our life, or if we did not examine our conscience properly, and consequently overlooked a mortal sin, or if we intentionally concealed a mortal sin. If our last confession was invalid, we must examine our conscience with regard to the time that has elapsed since our last valid confession. We should also reflect whether, in making our last confession, we unintentionally forgot any sin and whether we neglected to perform our penance after confession.

We should then consider the Commandments of God and of the Church and examine ourselves in regard to each in turn, whether we have sinned against any of them. We should also examine ourselves with regard to each of the seven capital sins. In examining our conscience, we can make use of the examination table given in any good prayerbook or of what has been said in Part II of this work regarding the commandments and the capital sins.

We should next consider how we have performed the special

duties of our station in life, as father or mother, husband or wife, teacher or pupil, master or employee, etc.

Finally each one should examine himself with regard to his predominant fault, that is, the fault he most often commits, and which is the cause of most of his sins. It is generally one of the seven capital sins. The sins we call to mind while examining our conscience should be carefully remembered and confessed in the same order in which we have examined our conscience.

2. In examining our conscience we must pay most attention to *mortal sins;* for we are obliged to confess all mortal sins. If we find we are guilty of mortal sins, we should ask ourselves, how often we have commited them, and whether there were any circumstances connected with them which would alter or increase their guilt, such as, for example, in case of theft, the value of the stolen goods. Another important matter in the case of a mortal sin is whether we have committed it in company with others, because we should then share the guilt of the others.

3. The examination of conscience preceding confession is a serious and important matter and sufficient time and care should be devoted to it. We should prolong the examination until we can say to ourselves that we have reasonably thought of all our sins, and that no mortal sin has escaped our memory. If we examine our conscience superficially and thereby expose ourselves to the danger of overlooking a mortal sin, our confession may be invalid.

4. It is a good practice to make a brief examination of conscience every evening with regard to how we have spent the day. Only in this way do we learn to know ourselves and get rid of our faults and make progress in virtue. By such a daily examen, the examination of conscience required for confession is made easier.

What does it mean to examine the conscience?

To examine the conscience means to consider earnestly what sins we have committed.

In what order should we examine our conscience?

We should examine our conscience in the following order: our last confession; the commandments of God; the commandments of the Church; the capital sins; the duties of our station in life; our predominant passion.

To what should we particularly attend when examining our conscience?

In examining our conscience we should attend particularly to mortal sins, the number of times we have committed a mortal sin, and the circumstances that may change its nature.

The Particular Examination of Conscience

St. Ignatius Loyola in his "Spiritual Exercises" advises us to make, besides the general examination of conscience, a particular examination with regard to some one fault or imperfection of which we especially desire to free ourselves. For this purpose we should provide ourselves with a notebook and divide each page into seven parts, for the seven days of the week. We should note down each day the number of times we have committed the particular fault in question. In this way we can see what progress we make from day to day and from week to week.

Among the many who have followed this advice of St. Ignatius was Cardinal Francis Schönborn, Prince-Archbishop of Prague, who died of pneumonia on a confirmation trip to Falkenau, June 24th, 1899. After his death a notebook, such as described above, was found in his house, and the final entry in it had been made on the 21st of June, the day on which the Cardinal became ill.

King George of Saxony used also to make a "special examination of conscience" in the way described. After his death it was found that he had made a mark in his notebook on the very day he died, the 15th of October, 1904.

CHAPTER VI

Contrition

The most necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance is contrition, for without contrition no sin can be forgiven.

1. In the Old Testament, God announced through the Prophet Ezechiel: "As I live . . . I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live" (Ez. XXXIII, 11). God does not desire the damnation of the wicked; He wants to pardon the sinner, and to give him back the life of grace he has lost. But the sinner must first be converted, that is, he must turn away from his sins and return to God. We turn away from our sins when we hate and abhor them, when we sincerely wish we had not committed them, when we are truly sorry for them. This is contrition. In the parable of the Prodigal Son Jesus teaches us that we must have sincere contrition for our sins. The Prodigal Son was genuinely sorry that he had left his father.

Therefore the Church, at the Council of Trent, defined that contrition has always been necessary before sins could be forgiven, and that it consists in an affliction of the soul and a detestation of sin.

Unaided reason tells us that the infinitely holy God cannot bestow His grace on a man who has turned his back on Him and persists in remaining away from Him.

2. Contrition must have certain qualities. It is not enough simply to repeat a verbal formula. We must be sorry for our sins

in heart and will. We may, of course, make use of a definite formula, but we must take care that the words really express our heart-felt sentiments.

We must have contrition at least for all the mortal sins we have committed. As long as the heart clings to even one mortal sin, we are not truly converted and cannot receive pardon.

Our contrition must be coupled with the firm resolution to die rather than be unfaithful to God again; else there is no genuine conversion.

If a drunkard repents of his passion for drink because it has deprived him of his property, honour and health, this does not mean that he is converted to God. He must have higher, supernatural motives for contrition; above all, he must be sorry for his sins because he has offended God.

If we return to God as contritely as the Prodigal Son returned to his father, God will receive us with open arms. Holy Scripture says: "A contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm L, 19).

When have we contrition for our sins?

We have contrition for our sins when we are truly sorry for having offended God.

For how many sins must we be sorry?

We must be sorry for at least all the mortal sins we have committed.

The Contrition of Peter

When Jesus stood before the judges who condemned Him to death, the Apostle Peter remained in the fore-court with the servants, waiting to hear the fate of His Master. He thought no one knew him, but they recognized him and said: "Thou also wast with Jesus. . . . Thou also art one of them!" Peter was frightened and said: "No, I know not the man!" Thus he denied the Saviour three times, although Jesus had said: "He that shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven" (Matth. X, 33). Peter even swore that he did not know

Jesus. Then the door of the hall opened, and Jesus was led forth. He looked at Peter sorrowfully, and Peter saw that he had grieved His Master deeply. He went out and wept bitterly.

Because Peter had such a deep contrition for his sin, Jesus granted him complete forgiveness and appeared to him after His Resurrection, before He appeared to any of the other Apostles. He also made him the head of His Church. But Peter was never again unfaithful to the Saviour. He preached as Jesus had commanded him to do and guided the Church, even though he was ridiculed and persecuted by Jews and pagans; nay, scourged, imprisoned, and threatened with death. In the end he was crucified for Christ's sake, asking only to be crucified with his head down because he was not worthy to die the same way as his Saviour.

CHAPTER VII

How to Excite Ourselves to True Contrition

The absolution pronounced by the priest is valid only if we have genuine contrition in our hearts at the moment it is given. Therefore we must excite ourselves to contrition before we enter the confessional.

In order to awaken sincere contrition in our hearts, we need above all the assistance of the Holy Ghost. We should ask earnestly for this favour saying: "O Holy Ghost, help me to have true contrition!"

Then let us meditate on one or the other articles of faith which is apt to move us to sorrow for our sins. The following are the most important motives for contrition:

1. God is infinitely great. The whole world belongs to Him, for He has created it. The earth obeys Him; the millions and millions of stars in the heavens pursue the courses He has traced for them. But I, a miserable creature, have dared to say to God: I will not serve! I will do as I please! Will God permit this? He is infinitely holy and hates evil. He is infinitely just and punishes sin severely. Every sinner who dies in the state of mortal sin will be cast into hell. How easily God could have let me die in my sins! And then I should be in hell for all eternity. If I have no mortal sin on my soul, I should at least have to suffer the pains of Purgatory. My God, what have I done? I thank Thee that Thou hast not cast me away. Pardon me for having sinned against Thee. I am sincerely sorry and will never offend thee again.

2. I have stained my soul by sin. If I have committed a

mortal sin, I have lost sanctifying grace. When I was in the state of grace, my soul was glorious; now it has become more hideous than a rotting corpse. I was an heir of Heaven, and the angels and saints were my brothers and sisters. Now I am an outcast from Heaven, from the family of God. O Father in Heaven! I have squandered the precious inheritance Thou gavest me; I have lost Thy grace and forfeited eternal happiness. Oh, I am very, very sorry! Have mercy on me! Give me back Thy grace and receive me as Thy child once more!

If we repent of our sins from such motives as these, our sorrow is caused chiefly by the fear of God. This is a good motive, though imperfect.

3. Our contrition is perfect if we are sorry for our sins for the love of God.

The following are motives by which we can excite ourselves to perfect contrition:

God is infinitely kind to me. He has bestowed innumerable benefits on me. He has given me my body and my soul, and sustains my life every moment. He thinks of me and cares for me continually. In Baptism He received me as His child. He pardoned me often in confession and He nourished my soul with the Body and Blood of His Son! He wishes to give Himself to me entirely and forever in Heaven. He says to me: "I love thee with an eternal love" (Jer. XXXI, 3). Yet I have been indifferent towards Him! Nay, I have despised Him! Perhaps I have preferred some evil person or a low desire to God. O Father in Heaven, I have given Thee indifference in return for Thy love. I deeply regret my ingratitude. Forgive me! Henceforth I will be Thy grateful child.

4. A particularly effective way to elicit perfect contrition is by contemplating our Divine Saviour on the Cross.

Jesus, my God and Saviour, hangs on the Cross in indescribable agony. He looks at me gently and says: "My child, I have suffered for thee. Dost thou believe that I love thee? What has

thou done? Thou knewest that I suffered for thy sins, and yet thou didst continue to sin! Thou hast despised my suffering and trampled the Blood I shed for thee under thy feet! Have I deserved such base ingratitude from thee?"

O Jesus, forgive me my sins! From the depth of my heart I am sorry for them. Henceforth I want to love Thee, and nothing shall ever separate me from Thee again. I will die rather than be unfaithful to Thee.

5. After we have considered one or more of these motives, let us pray:

"O God, Thou hatest sin and dost punish it with severity. I have sinned so often! Thou art full of love for me. Thou didst die for me on the cross! Yet I have offended Thee so often and grievously! I am profoundly sorry and firmly resolved never to sin again. I will also avoid the occasions of sin. Merciful Father, forgive me!"

Mary Magdalen's Contrition

Mary Magdalen, a wealthy Jewish woman who lived in the time of Jesus, was a great sinner. Her sins were public and through them she had lost her good reputation. One day she heard Jesus preach and learned from Him what a kind, merciful father God is. She was deeply pained because she had not hitherto loved the Father in Heaven, nay, had even despised Him and trampled His commandments under foot. She saw from the majestic bearing of Jesus, His manner of speech, and His miracles, that He was God. She firmly believed in His divinity. In Jesus she saw before her eyes the infinite goodness of God. It grieved her the more that until now she had requited this kindness by ingratitude. She resolved to begin a new life and thenceforth to serve God with all her strength. She was eager to give expression to her love of God and her deep contrition, and one day, when Jesus was being entertained by a Pharisee, Mary Magdalen entered the hall quite unexpectedly. Taking no notice of the indignant looks of the Pharisee, she went up to Jesus, prostrated herself before Him, and burst into tears. Her tears fell on the feet of the Saviour, and she humbly dried them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them

with a precious ointment, which she had brought in an alabaster vase. Jesus permitted her to do this, and when the Pharisees protested, He said: "Many sins will be forgiven her because she hath loved much." Turning to Mary, He said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace." Mary Magdalen went away overjoyed. Her conversion was complete. Henceforth her only thought was to do penance for her sins and to please God. She became one of the greatest saints.

From the words of Jesus we can see that Mary Magdalen's sorrow for her sins was dictated by her love of God, and how pleasing to God it was. Let us also have deep sorrow for our sins. Then Jesus will say also to us: "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

CHAPTER VIII

The Value of Perfect Contrition—The Purpose of Amendment

1. If we have an imperfect contrition (attrition) for our sins, that is, if we are sorry for them out of fear of God, and confess them in that state of mind, God will forgive us our sins at the moment the priest pronounces the absolution. But if our contrition is perfect, that is, if we are sorry for the love of God, then God will forgive us our sins at once and without confession. For He has told us He loves those who love Him, and that He will make His abode with them (Prov. VIII, 17; John XIV, 23). But we must nevertheless confess whatever sins we may have committed, for Jesus has commanded that we should go to the priest for absolution. Whoever will not observe this precept has no true love and no genuine contrition in his heart, and will not obtain forgiveness.

2. Anyone who is in the state of mortal sin and in danger of death can, if there is no priest to hear his confession, be saved from eternal damnation by making an act of perfect contrition. When in danger of death, we should excite ourselves to perfect contrition, even if we think we are free from mortal sin; for we can never be sure about this. It may be that we shall die so quickly and unexpectedly that we cannot excite ourselves to sorrow for our sins immediately before death, and hence we should make an act of perfect contrition at once if we have had the misfortune to commit a mortal sin. It is advisable to make an act of perfect contrition every evening. In this way

we can save ourselves from hell in case of unexpected death. Perfect contrition is the most important part of our night prayers.

3. A firm *purpose of amendment* must necessarily be joined to our contrition. When we are truly sorry for our sins, we quite naturally form the resolution never to sin again. We must firmly resolve never again, under any conditions, to commit a mortal sin, and in particular, to fight against our predominant passion. We must also be determined to use all the means necessary for amendment. One means that is necessary for all is *fervent prayer,* especially in temptation. For those who habitually commit mortal sin, a necessary means of amendment is frequent confession and communion. It is furthermore necessary to avoid the immediate occasions of mortal sin, *i. e.,* persons, places, pleasures, books, etc., which are likely to lead us to sin. We must also resolve to make restitution for any injury we may have done to the property, reputation, or salvation of others.

If we have no firm purpose of amendment, we are wanting also in contrition and can not obtain pardon for our sins. But if we are firmly resolved to amend our lives, our contrition is real. A clear sign that we have formed an earnest resolution is the actual amendment of our lives after confession.

What do we receive when we have perfect contrition?

When we have perfect contrition, we receive immediate pardon for our sins, provided that we have the will to confess our mortal sins.

What is meant by a firm purpose of amendment?

A firm purpose of amendment means to be earnestly resolved (1) to amend our lives and never again at any price to commit a mortal sin; (2) to employ the necessary means of amendment, especially by avoiding the proximate occasions of sin; (3) to make restitution for any injury we may have done to our neighbour.

The Penitent Thief

Even on the cross Jesus Christ showed how merciful God is to the repentant sinner. Two criminals were crucified with Him. One in his last hours repented of his life of sin and with humility and confidence turned to Jesus saying: "Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom." And Jesus answered: "Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise" (Luke XXIII, 39, 43).

Perfect Contrition in the World War

Never perhaps have men excited themselves to perfect contrition so often as in the World War.

In a sense the first victim of the World War was the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who was murdered June 28, 1914. This noble man used to say a fervent prayer every evening with his family. This prayer consisted of three parts,—perfect contrition for all the sins of their past lives, pardon for God's sake of all enemies, and a declaration of readiness to die when, where, and how it might please God. A few days before his death, on the feast of the Sacred Heart, June 19th, Francis Ferdinand received Holy Communion together with his family.

The soldiers at the various fronts were frequently in danger of death and many had no opportunity of going to confession for quite a long time. On such occasions well instructed Christian soldiers made frequent acts of perfect contrition. An Austrian lieutenant who returned wounded, related the following incident to a priest: "The second battalion of Company 5 of the Bavarian Infantry had with great difficulty climbed a mountain on their way to meet the enemy for the first time. The captain made them halt in a forest and addressed them as follows: 'In a quarter of an hour we shall be in front of the enemy, under a shower of bullets. Get ready!' Every soldier drew from his pocket either a prayerbook or a rosary. There was a solemn silence, while officers and their men 'prepared themselves by an act of perfect contrition.' It was a beautiful and touching sight. They then marched down the mountain and defeated the enemy."

A war chaplain, Fr. Syring, gives the following account of the spiritual work done by the hospital staff: "There was not an Evangelical minister available. Naturally we helped and comforted our Protestant soldiers. I think I can still hear one of them saying: 'Will you not pray a little for me too?' and another: 'Father, I should like to make an act of contrition; will you not help me?' I prayed with them and tried to help them to elicit perfect contrition so as to render easier their passing to our Father in Heaven."

CHAPTER IX

Why and What We Should Confess

1. In order to obtain forgiveness for our sins we must confess them to a priest duly empowered by the bishop to give us absolution. This is called confession. Jesus Christ instituted confession when He said to His Apostles: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John XX, 23). Confession was nothing new to the Apostles and to the Israelites. In the Old Covenant the Jews had to offer sacrifices in atonement for certain sins and at the same time confess to a priest. In the Catholic Church confession has been in use since the time of the Apostles. But it was only in 1215 that the Church decreed that every Catholic should confess his sins at least once a year to a duly appointed priest. This does not mean, as some ignorant people think, that confession was introduced for the first time in the thirteenth century; the decree in question was passed to cure the carelessness that was then prevalent in regard to confession.

In commanding us to confess our sins, Jesus supplies a great need of the human heart. For when we have a heavy burden on our conscience, it is a great relief to speak about it to some one who is well disposed towards us, who has experience, and who will not reveal anything we confide to him. If, in addition, he can remove the burden of sin from our hearts, then the blessing is beyond price. Innumerable souls have been saved from despair by confession; more tears of joy have been shed after confession than on any other occasion. The majority of

penitents need instruction from the priest regarding the extent of their guilt and how they can atone for it; they also need the assistance of the priest to gain a better knowledge of themselves, to elicit contrition, and to amend their lives. This instruction and help is made possible through confession.

2. From the confession the priest should know what the conscience of the penitent is like, and whether he can give him absolution or not. Therefore the penitent must confess all that is important, that is, all the mortal sins he has committed, the number of times, and all important circumstances connected with them. It is not enough merely to say we have sinned in thought, word, and deed; the sins must be mentioned by name. We must not palliate the guilt of our sins, but confess them candidly and clearly. We should tell our sins without waiting for the priest to question us, for often the priest sees no occasion to put questions. Any questions the priest asks should be answered with perfect candour; one lie can make a confession invalid. It is not necessary to confess venial sins; but it is advisable to do so and to state how often we committed them.

Sometimes confession is urgently needed, but it is impossible to make a complete confession, for example, when a person is so ill that he can scarcely think for weakness, or when a large number of soldiers want to go to confession before a battle and there is only one priest available. In such cases the penitent needs only to indicate generally that he has sinned, or if even this is impossible, to signify contrition or his desire for absolution. But the obligation remains to confess all his mortal sins later, if an opportunity should present itself. Even in such an incomplete confession contrition is indispensable.

3. If it appears difficult to us to confess our sins, we should consider that God could ask something much more difficult as a condition of pardoning us. Confession lasts only a few moments, after which we are free from our sins for ever. But anyone who

knowingly conceals a mortal sin in the confessional abuses the Sacrament of Penance, commits another mortal sin, and does not receive pardon for his other sins. In such a case the absolution given by the priest is invalid. The sinner's conscience is not at rest. He is in constant danger of dying in his sins and of being lost for all eternity. At the Last Judgment his sins will be revealed to the whole world, to his great shame. St. Cyprian (d. 258) writes: "I beg of you, brethren, let each of you confess your faults as long as you are on this earth, as long as your confession can be accepted, as long as your penance and the absolution given by the priest are still valid before God."

We must not be ashamed to confess our sins. It shows character and an honourable disposition to confess one's sins. Further, the confessor is himself a poor, sinful man and therefore far removed from despising the sinner because of his sins. On the contrary, he esteems him for his sincerity and is happy to relieve him of his burden. The confessor may not under any circumstances reveal what the penitent has told him, not even to any one in authority, spiritual or secular. He must suffer imprisonment or death rather than betray a penitent. There have been many cases in which priests have borne disgrace, imprisonment or death because they would not reveal what they had heard in the confessional. In the 1900 years of the Church's history there has been scarcely one instance known of a priest consciously betraying a penitent.[1]

Any one that conceals a sin in confession only gratifies the devil, who hopes the sinner will perish. But he who makes a sincere confession causes God, his guardian angel, and all Heaven to rejoice, and procures for himself a joy and peace such as the world can never give.

What must we tell in confession?

[1] See Kurtscheid-Marks-Preuss, *A History of the Seal of Confession*, St. Louis, 1928.

In confession we must tell at least all our mortal sins, the number of times they have been committed, and any important circumstances.

What are the consequences of wilfully concealing a mortal sin in confession?

If a mortal sin is wilfully concealed in confession, the confession is invalid, and another mortal sin is committed.

Joy after Confession

Father Andrew Hamerle, C.SS.R., of Vienna, relates how he once met an army officer who was wearing a medal for exceptional courage. He spoke about religion, and Fr. Hamerle said to the officer: "The medal you are wearing shows that you have faithfully kept your vow to serve your country and have fought bravely. Pardon me for enquiring whether you have kept your first vow—your baptismal vow—with equal fidelity." The officer was embarrassed at this remark. But Fr. Hamerle said: "What has been neglected can still be done." This did not appeal to the officer, and Fr. Hamerle continued: "Captain, you have often faced death and have stood firm amid flying bullets. How can you now fear to do your duty? No, you cannot and may not evade it." For a time the officer struggled with his feelings. Then he said: "Yes, I shall do my duty and I should like to receive the sacraments from you; but not just now." "That is right, Captain," said Fr. Hamerle, "but why not today? Come along with me." The officer followed him into a room of the monastery, and asked the priest to help him. This the father did, and the captain made his confession simply and sincerely. When he had finished, he knelt down before the priest and, kissing his hand, said: "You are my greatest benefactor." So happy was he after confession. The priest then said: "But now you must receive the Sacraments often." "As often as you wish," was the answer. And he kept his word. He lived a pious life for many years and died in peace.

CHAPTER X

How to Correct Imperfect Confessions—What to Do During and After Confession

1. Anyone who is conscious of having made an imperfect confession must correct this mistake the next time. He must tell the priest that he made an invalid confession, how often this happened, and whether he received holy Communion while in this state. Further, he must confess all the other mortal sins he has committed since his last valid confession. As long as the invalid confessions have not been made good, all succeeding confessions are invalid, the burden of sins becomes greater and greater, conversion grows more and more difficult, and there is the greatest danger of dying in this state and of being damned forever.

2. A confession in which former confessions are repeated is called a *general confession.* Only those who have made an invalid confession are obliged to make a general confession. But it is useful for everyone to do so from time to time, especially before Confirmation and before changing one's state of life, before marriage, for instance, or at the end of a mission or retreat; finally, on one's death-bed, if possible. At a general confession the conscience should be put thoroughly in order; usually one has greater sorrow for one's sins then, and therefore is more certain of forgiveness. Therefore, as a rule, a general confession brings greater joy; on our death-bed the recollection of the general confessions we have made will be very consoling. Scrupulous persons, however, should make a general confession only when they are sure that they made an invalid confession, or when their confessor advises them to do so.

3. If, in spite of careful preparation, we have forgotten to confess some of our sins, even though they be mortal sins, we need not be troubled, for to forget sins does not make a confession invalid and the forgotten sins are forgiven with the others. In such a case we may go to holy Communion without going to confession again. But at the next confession the forgotten sins, at least the mortal sins, must be told.

4. The following is the exterior form of confession: The penitent with folded hands kneels down in the confessional. The priest asks God to bless him that he may make a good confession. At the same time he makes the sign of the cross over the penitent; then the latter tells how long it is since his last confession, and says: **"I confess before God that I have committed the following sins."** (These words are not essential.) Then the penitent confesses his sins in the same order in which he has examined his conscience, and concludes with the words: **"I am heartily sorry for having offended God, and firmly determined to amend my life."** These concluding words are not necessary either, except when the penitent has neglected to make an act of contrition and a firm purpose of amendment before confession.

If the priest finds that the confession is not sufficiently clear or complete, he will ask the penitent some questions; these should be answered with perfect candour. He will also give the penitent a short instruction; this should be listened to attentively. The penitent may also ask the priest questions concerning his soul. The priest then imposes a proportionate penance and with hands joined prays that God may grant the penitent forgiveness. Meantime the latter may again ask God for pardon. Then the priest raises his right hand and says: "I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." At the same time he makes the sign of the cross over the penitent; the latter should also make the sign of the cross. If the penitent has confessed his

sins with sincerity and good-will, the absolution is valid in God's eyes and the Heavenly Father receives the prodigal son or daughter with open arms.

5. The penitent should as soon as possible conscientiously perform the penance imposed upon him and then thank God fervently for having received him back as His child.

The penance is imposed on us in order that we may, at least in some measure, share the severe penance which Jesus performed for us and make some restitution and atonement for the sins we have committed. God exhorts us through the prophet Joel (II, 12): "Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning." And Pope St. Gregory the Great (d. 604) writes: "He that has to admit he has been guilty of unlawful acts, should take care to abstain from some things that are lawful, in order thus to make amends to his Creator." The penance imposed by the priest is very light. If we did no further penance, it is extremely probable that we should have a great deal to suffer either in this life or in the next (Purgatory). Therefore, let us assume voluntary penances by denying ourselves licit pleasures and performing works of mercy; let us also accept humbly the crosses which God sends us, and bear them patiently as a penance for our sins.

Generally speaking, we may not regard our work as finished when we have received absolution; but must be careful to carry out our good resolutions, live up to the exhortations of the confessor, and do better in future. If we progress in virtue at least one step each time we go to confession, we may be certain that we have made good confessions and are advancing on the way to Heaven.

What must he do who has made an invalid confession?

He who has made an invalid confession must reveal this fact in the confessional and state how often; he must also repeat all the confessions that were invalid.

What must he do who has forgotten a mortal sin in confession?

He who has forgotten a mortal sin in confession must reveal it at his next confession.

What must we do after confession?

After confession we must perform the penance given us and truly amend our lives.

Confession in the World War

In time of war confession is an indescribably great solace to soldiers who have the faith. Many war chaplains have related how fervently the soldiers went to confession, in churches, houses, trenches, at the front, in the open field, in the forest, on snow-covered hills, standing at their posts, travelling by train, on horseback, lying on the field of battle,—whenever an opportunity offered. And after confession they were so happy, so calm!

Fr. Kleinenbroich, O. P., chaplain to a German division in the war, wrote in the Cologne *Volkszeitung* (November 17th, 1915):

". . . On the field of battle one experiences many touching examples of deep religious fervour. Once thirty-eight soldiers from the Rhineland, having heard that an attack was to be made that evening, quickly signalled to their chaplain the following message: 'Father, can we see you once more before the charge? If yes, you must be here in half an hour.' The soldiers wanted to go to confession before going to the front; their request was of course granted. After the attack ten of them were dead and eighteen badly wounded. Their commander assured me that these Rhinelanders had fought like lions against a superior force."

A Self-Imposed Penance

In the city of Seville, Spain, a fine display is given day and night during the last days of Holy Week. Enormous well-lighted floats are carried about, on which are shown scenes from the Passion of Christ or the life of Our Lady. It requires from twenty to forty men to carry one of these floats; but the men are invisible, being concealed by curtains. Almost all the inhabitants of the city assist at the processions, either as helpers or as spectators.

As the processions last from five to ten or twelve hours, this is no small sacrifice for the helpers to make. Often a penitent can be seen in the procession, barefooted and carrying a heavy cross on his shoulders. A few years ago a man who had partaken of too much wine threw a missile at a statue of Our Lady, causing it to fall. When he sobered up, he condemned his deed and repented. Every year since he has marched in the procession laden with chains, accusing himself of his sin, and begging pardon of the Blessed Virgin for having ill-treated her statue.

CHAPTER XI

The Value of Indulgences and How We Can Gain Them

1. In the Sacrament of Penance, when God forgives mortal sins, He also remits the eternal punishment due to them, that is, the punishment of hell. But generally some temporal punishment, that is, punishment lasting only for a time, remains and must be suffered, either in this life or in Purgatory. Now Jesus has empowered His Church to remit temporal punishments also, for He said to the authorities: **"Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven"** (Matth. XVIII, 18). The Church uses this power and when our sins have been forgiven, remits also the temporal punishment due to them, either wholly or in part. This remission of temporal punishment is called an "indulgence." An indulgence, therefore, is not a remission of sins, but a remission of the temporal punishments due to sin after forgiveness has been granted.

2. When by an indulgence (or pardon) all the temporal punishment that we should have had to suffer is remitted, this indulgence is called plenary; when only part of the punishment is remitted, it is called partial. Partial indulgences are indulgences of forty, fifty, one hundred or more days, or of one or more years. By such an indulgence as much of the punishment is remitted as one would have to undergo if one did penance for forty, fifty, or one hundred days, etc., according to the ancient penitential discipline, which was much severer than the present.

3. To gain an indulgence we must be in the state of sanctify-

ing grace. If we are conscious of unforgiven mortal sin, we must first gain remission of the *eternal* punishment through the Sacrament of Penance.

In order fully to gain a plenary indulgence we must be free not only from mortal, but also from venial sins.

For the gaining of indulgences the Church prescribes certain good works. For example, by devoutly saying: "All for Thee, most Sacred Heart of Jesus!" we can gain an indulgence of three hundred days; by making the Sign of the Cross, one hundred days; the same for saying, "Praise be to Jesus Christ," and for the answer, "For all eternity. Amen." An unusually large number of indulgences can be gained by saying the Rosary on beads that have special indulgences attached to them; by joining a confraternity such as that of the Rosary, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, or the Scapular; and by making the Stations of the Cross. To gain a plenary indulgence it is usually necessary to receive the Sacraments. For example, a plenary indulgence can be gained on the Feast of the Sacred Heart by receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist, visiting a church where the feast of the Sacred Heart is kept, and there praying for the intention of the Holy Father. Those of the faithful who are in the habit of going to confession twice a month, or to holy Communion daily, can gain all indulgences without confession. A great many other indulgences will be found mentioned in any good prayerbook.

Most indulgences can be applied to the poor souls in Purgatory by making a special intention to that effect.

Indulgences, or any blessed article, may never be sold. In former times abuses crept in with regard to indulgences, but these abuses were condemned and abolished by the Church.

Let us not neglect to gain indulgences in order to shorten Purgatory for ourselves and others. Let us often ask God to allow us to gain all the indulgences we possibly can. One who is indifferent to, and has no intention of gaining indulgences,

will certainly not gain any and will regret his negligence, if not in this world, then in the next.

What is an indulgence?

An indulgence is the pardon or remission of temporary punishments due to sin.

What is necessary in order to gain indulgences?

In order to gain indulgences we must be in the state of sanctifying grace and perform the good works prescribed by the Church.

The Portiuncula Indulgence

"Portiuncula" was the name of a little church particularly dear to St. Francis of Assisi, which he restored after it had fallen into ruins.[1] There is a pious legend that St. Francis in this church obtained from our Divine Saviour the grace of a plenary indulgence to be gained by all who visited this church on the anniversary of its consecration, August 2nd. The popes confirmed and extended this indulgence and it can now be gained in all the churches of the Franciscans, Capuchins, and Franciscan Nuns, as well as in one or more churches designated by the bishop in each locality. Accordingly, on the 2nd of August, all Catholics who receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist can gain a plenary indulgence for themselves or for the poor souls in Purgatory as often as they visit one of these churches and pray for the intention of the Holy Father. In many countries, *e. g.*, in the Tyrol, the 2nd of August has become a great feast, on which almost all the people receive the Sacraments and, by gaining the Portiuncula Indulgence repeatedly, bring great relief to the poor souls.

[1] The word "Portiuncula" originally meant a small heirloom and referred to the plot of ground on which the church stands.

CHAPTER XII

The Blessed Sacrament, Promised by God, Instituted by Jesus Christ

The greatest and most beautiful Sacrament is the Holy Eucharist or Blessed Sacrament, also called Sacrament of the Altar because it is on the altar and administered from the altar.

1. From the earliest times God repeatedly promised men this great Sacrament. He symbolized it by the sacrifice of the royal priest Melchisedech, which consisted of bread and wine, by the Easter lamb, which was slain as a sacrifice and partaken of as a holy meal, and by the manna on which the Israelites lived in the desert. God prophesied through David that the Messias would be "a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech" (Ps. CIX, 4). In the twenty-first Psalm the Redeemer is represented on the Cross lamenting His suffering and forsaken condition, but afterwards, beholding the happy future, He says: "The poor shall eat and shall be filled: and they shall praise the Lord that seek him: their hearts shall live for ever and ever. All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord: and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he shall have dominion over the nations. All the fat ones of the earth have eaten and have adored: all they that go down to the earth [into the grave] shall fall before him" (Psalm XXI, 27–30). Through the prophet Malachias God foretold that "a clean oblation" would be offered to the Lord "in every place," *i. e.*, throughout the whole world (Mal. I, 11).

2. Jesus Himself spoke of this Sacrament. When He had fed

5,000 men, women, and children with five loaves and two fishes in the desert, He promised that He would give them a yet more wonderful bread, saying: "I am the true bread from heaven" (John VI, 32); "if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world" (John VI, 52). The Jews became angry and said: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus explained to them: "Amen, amen I say unto you: Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him" (John VI, 53–57).

3. What Jesus promised on this occasion, He fulfilled on the eve of His Passion, when He ate the Easter lamb with His Apostles at the Last Supper. He took bread and, looking up to Heaven, gave thanks to His Father, blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying: "Take ye, and eat. This is my body." Then He took the chalice with wine, gave thanks, blessed it, and gave it to the Apostles, saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins" (Matth. XXVI, 26–27). Astonished and filled with deepest reverence, the Apostles partook of the sacred repast. It bore the forms of bread and wine, but from the words spoken by Jesus they knew it was no longer bread and wine, but had been changed into His precious Body and Blood. Finally Jesus bade them to "do this in commemoration of me" (Luke XXII, 19).

This was our Divine Saviour's last will and testament. He bequeathed to us His Body and His Blood under the forms of bread and wine. How incomprehensibly great is His love! Let us be duly thankful for this unutterable proof of His affection and goodness!

Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui,
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui!
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui!

Down in adoration falling,
Lo! the Sacred Host we hail;
See! our ancient forms departing,
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.

What is the Blessed Sacrament?

The Blessed Sacrament is the true body and blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

What were the words Jesus employed in instituting the Blessed Sacrament?

Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament with the words: "Take ye and eat! This is my body, which is given for you. Drink ye all of this; this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins. Do this in commemoration of me."

The True Paschal Lamb

About 1500 years before Christ the Jews were languishing in wretched slavery in Egypt. They implored God to come to their aid. Through Moses God commanded the King to permit the Israelites to go into the land of Chanaan which God had promised them. But the King and the people of Egypt refused to let them go. Then God sent a series of terrible plagues upon the land and its inhabitants. But the King remained obdurate. Finally God warned him that unless he gave in, the first-born son in every family would be slain. The Jews were instructed to sacrifice an immaculate lamb on the evening of the 14th day of Nisan and to sprinkle its blood on the door-posts of their houses.

The Israelites did as God had commanded. That same night the first-born son in every Egyptian house died, but the Israelites were

protected by the blood of the lamb. There was great lamentation throughout the land, and the Egyptians themselves now urged the Jews to leave. They left and finally reached the promised land after many difficulties and dangers. By divine command they celebrated every year the festival of Easter with great joy and ceremony, in thanksgiving for having been miraculously rescued from the bondage of the Egyptians. At this time a lamb was sacrificed and eaten, as had been done formerly in Egypt.

At the Last Supper Jesus partook of the Easter lamb with His Apostles. But He Himself was the true Paschal Lamb. Hitherto the lamb had been symbolic of our Saviour. Even as the lamb had been sacrificed by God's decree, so Jesus was sent to sacrifice Himself for men. Therefore He was called the "Lamb of God" by John the Baptist. The Paschal lamb was slain and every house that was sprinkled with its blood was preserved from death. Jesus patiently allowed Himself to be slain like a lamb on the same date, the 14h Nisan; by a special decree of God none of His bones were broken, as were those of the men crucified with Him. Those whose souls have been washed in Baptism by the Blood of Jesus and who faithfully preserve the grace received in Baptism will be preserved from eternal death. The Paschal lamb, after it had been sacrificed, was partaken of as a holy rite. Jesus desires not only to be sacrificed, but to be our Food in Holy Communion. The Israelites had to be prepared for a long journey when they partook of the first Easter lamb; similarly we, when we partake of *our* Easter Lamb, should be mindful that we are on the journey to Heaven and should detach our hearts from earthly things.

The Jews celebrated Easter in thanksgiving for having been saved. We also do this. But the chief celebration will take place in Heaven, where (Apocalypse V) we shall fall down before the lamb and sing a new canticle to Him: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth" (Apoc. V, 9–10). And thousands and thousands of angels will cry out: "The lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and . . . glory, and benediction," and every creature in Heaven and on the earth and in the sea will be heard saying: "To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever" (Apoc. V, 12–13).

CHAPTER XIII

Christ's Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar

1. Jesus Christ desired to give men the Divine Bread, *i. e.*, Himself, for all time. Therefore He said to the Apostles: "Do this in commemoration of me." With this He gave to them and their successors, *i. e.*, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, the command and full power to do at all times what He did at the Last Supper, that is, to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood and to administer this spiritual Food to the faithful. The bishops and priests obey this command when at Holy Mass, in the name of Jesus Christ, they repeat over the bread and wine the same words which He spoke at the Last Supper, and thus change the material elements into His Body and Blood, of which they themselves partake and which they distribute to the faithful.

2. After the Consecration the Body of Jesus Christ is present under the form of bread, the so-called "Host." It is the *living* Body of Christ and therefore His Blood and His Soul also. After the Consecration the Blood of Jesus Christ is present in the chalice, not apart from the Body, but in the Body, as in case of any living person. Therefore the Body and the Soul of Jesus Christ are present also in the chalice. Our Divine Redeemer is present in the Holy Eucharist not only as man, but also as God; for His two natures are inseparably united. He is corporeally present, but after the manner of a spirit, that is, in such a way His whole being is present in each part of the sacred host and in each drop of the consecrated wine.

After the Consecration Jesus remains present under the ap-

pearances of bread and wine as long as these appearances last.

3. In order to fulfil Christ's command, the priest at Mass partakes not only of the species of the bread, but also of the form of the wine. Formerly both species were administered also to the faithful laity. But owing to manifold difficulties, the Church has departed from this custom, and now the Holy Eucharist is administered to the laity only in the form of bread.

4. Since the time of the Apostles the Catholic Church has always believed and taught that Jesus Christ is really and truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. St. Paul writes: "The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Cor. X, 16). St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, a pupil of the Apostles, who suffered martyrdom in 107, writes: "The Holy Eucharist is the flesh of our Redeemer, the same flesh which suffered for us, and which the Eternal Father in His love raised from the dead." ("Eucharist" is the Greek expression for the Blessed Sacrament; its literal meaning is, "a good gift.") Another Church Father, St. Justin Martyr, who died in the year 166, writes: "We are taught that this blessed food is the flesh and blood of the Son of God become man." In the Roman catacombs, which served the early Christians as burial places and sometimes also as churches, are to be found pictures and inscriptions which clearly indicate belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Throughout all the centuries innumerable persons have testified that the Catholic Church has always held this belief. All Eastern Churches hold this faith, even those which separated very early from the Catholic Church. Even if we no longer knew the words spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, this constant faith of the Catholic Church would be sufficient proof of the Real Presence. For it is quite impossible for the

Church to err in such an important matter, since Jesus and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, are with her always.

Therefore it is perfectly certain that Jesus is present on our altar with flesh and blood, as Man and as God. It is "his delight to be with the children of men" (Prov. VIII, 31). How great must be His love for us!

What does the priest do at the Consecration?

At the Consecration the priest changes bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

What is on the altar after the Consecration?

After the Consecration Jesus is present on the altar under the appearances of bread and wine.

A Witness from the Catacombs

In the days when the Christians were persecuted by the pagans, a pious boy called Tarsicius was sent by a priest to bring the Holy Viaticum to some Christians who were in prison awaiting death. The pagans did not know the boy and it was thought that he would be allowed to enter the prison without hindrance. Tarsicius joyfully agreed to undertake this mission and reverently set out bearing the Blessed Sacrament in his clothes. Some pagans who met him believed he carried a secret message to the Christians, and tried to force him to give it up. He courageously resisted until he died under their blows. The Christians honoured him as a martyr, and Pope Damasus (d. 384) had the following inscription placed on his tomb: "When St. Tarsicius bore the Blessed Sacrament, a savage mob tried to force him to deliver the Sacred Host to the impious; but Tarsicius defended the Divine Sacrament and sacrificed his life rather than betray the Heavenly Body to the raging dogs."

This is one of many inscriptions which show the faith of the early Christians in the Real Presence.

The Suspended Monstrance

In order to strengthen our faith in the Real Presence, God has from time to time worked striking miracles through the Blessed Sacrament. At Favernay in France one night a fire broke out in

the church. It started on the altar, on which were kept two large Hosts, enclosed between two crystals in a monstrance. The whole altar with its trappings was reduced to ashes, but the monstrance with the two Hosts remained intact. For thirty-three hours it hung in the air without any visible support. Over 10,000 people, witnessed this striking miracle at their leisure. At the end of this time, the monstrance in the presence of a large crowd of people, slowly descended on a corporal, which had been placed on the ground. The truth of this fact was confirmed, after a strict examination, by the Archbishop of Besançon in a public document in which it was declared to be an indisputable miracle. Three months later (1608) St. Francis de Sales visited the church and venerated the two Hosts. One of the Hosts is still venerated in Favernay, to which many pilgrimages are made for the purpose. The other Host some time after was taken to the neighbouring town of Dôle, where it was lost during the French Revolution.

CHAPTER XIV

How We Should Honour and Love the Blessed Sacrament

1. Because Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, is present in the Blessed Sacrament, we owe to this Sacrament the highest form of veneration, *i. e.,* adoration or divine worship. The Church exhibits this worship in various ways.

Costly and beautiful churches are built in honour of the Blessed Sacrament. The greatest care is taken in adorning the altar—usually the high altar—on which the Sacrament is kept. The tabernacle is lined with silk. Smaller consecrated Hosts are kept in a "ciborium" for administering Holy Communion to the faithful; a larger Host is kept in the "monstrance" or "ostensorium" for public exposition. Generally at least those parts of the ciborium and the monstrance which come into contact with the Sacred Hosts are of silver, plated with gold and blessed by the bishop. The ciborium is covered with a little silk cloth. A "perpetual light" burns in front of the altar where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. When the Sacred Host is exposed in the monstrance for adoration, incense is burned before it at the beginning and at the end of devotions. The clouds of incense indicate that we adore the Blessed Sacrament and desire that our prayers may ascend to God and be pleasing to Him. Relics of the holy martyrs are enclosed in every altar on which Mass is celebrated. In the early days of Christianity the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered beside the graves of the martyrs when possible.

One of the most beautiful feasts of the Catholic Church is Corpus Christi, that is, the feast of the Body of the Lord. On this day the Blessed Sacrament is not only venerated in the church, but in Catholic countries is carried through the streets and fields at the head of a procession in order that it may be adored by the whole population.

2. Every Catholic should worship the Blessed Sacrament to the best of his ability. When the Sacred Host is carried past us on the feast of Corpus Christi, we should kneel down reverently; and also when we meet the Blessed Sacrament carried by the priest to the sick. When passing a church, men should manifest their reverence for the Blessed Sacrament by raising their hats and women by making the Sign of the Cross. When entering or leaving a church we should salute Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with some such words as: "Jesus, I live for Thee; Jesus, I die for Thee; Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death!" When passing the tabernacle we should bend the right knee to the ground. While in Church, our attention should be constantly directed to the altar, where Jesus is, and our whole demeanour should show reverence and adoration.

3. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament merits not only our adoration, but also our most fervent love. His love for us must be exceeding great, as He descends from Heaven to dwell among us day and night. Therefore we on our part should show him all the love we can! Let us visit the church frequently to adore our Saviour and best Friend. Let us visit Him not only on Sundays and holydays of obligation, when He calls us through the commandment of His Church, but also on other days, to offer Him our veneration and love and to acquaint Him with our needs.

What kind of veneration do we owe to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament?

We owe Him the highest kind of veneration, namely, divine worship.

The Eucharistic Congresses

In order to show the greatest possible honour to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Eucharistic Congresses have been held in various cities since the year 1881. An International Eucharistic Congress is a great gathering of people in one place to adore the Blessed Sacrament, to which the whole world is invited,—a sort of Universal Feast of Corpus Christi. The first Eucharistic Congress took place in 1881 at Lille, France. That of 1910 in Montreal, Canada; that of 1926 in Chicago; that of 1928 in Sydney, Australia.

Joy in our Saviour's presence and love of His Person have increased enormously as a consequence of these Congresses.

How a Tyrolese Congregation Protected the Blessed Sacrament from Sacrilege

In 1916 the parish priest and the curate of Torcegno in the Valsugana valley in South Tyrol were taken prisoners by the Italians and at the order of the Italian military authorities the inhabitants had to quit the neighbourhood. But the Blessed Sacrament was still in the church. How could it be brought to a safe place? This question caused the poor people great anxiety because they had not the slightest hope that one of their priests would be liberated. To leave the Blessed Sacrament behind without protection was not to be thought of. Finally they solved the difficulty in the following way: A well brought-up boy of six years was chosen to administer Holy Communion to those who desired to receive it. On the following Sunday the congregation assembled in the church. Profound silence reigned. All were deeply moved and anxiously expectant. Now the boy appears dressed in white, angel-like, and walks hesitatingly to the altar. A voice is heard beginning the Confiteor, in which all join, with tears in their eyes. Then the boy mounts the steps of the altar, opens the tabernacle, and reverently brings forth the ciborium. He then goes to the communion rails, where most of the faithful are kneeling, and administers the Sacred Hosts to them, several to each, until the ciborium is empty. Finally he washes the ciborium with wine and water and gives this to one of the faithful to drink.

The above was related by a bishop to the Holy Father and the latter, deeply touched, sent the child his blessing and a gift to the faithful Tyrolese.[1]

[1] *Sendbote des göttl. Herzens Jesu,* 1916, IX.

CHAPTER XV

The Holy Mass

Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist in order to be constantly with us with His flesh and blood after the Ascension, and chiefly to enable us to offer a fitting sacrifice to God.

1. Sacrifices have always been offered to God. In the Old Covenant God Himself, through Moses, instituted them for the Israelites who desired to show their love and veneration ot their Lord. There were gifts consisting of animals, fruits, incense, bread, or wine. The people, as it were, invited God to a repast provided by themselves. But these sacrifices were only symbols of the worshippers themselves, who desired to dedicate themselves entirely to God. A sacrifice was at the same time a thanksgiving for benefits received, a prayer for new graces, and a reparation for offences committed against God. All the sacrifices of the Old Testament were symbolic of the one sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ on the Cross. This was the only sacrifice worthy of God. By it Jesus Christ paid infinite honour to His Father, atoned for the outrages committed against God, and merited pardon, grace, and salvation for sinners.

2. Jesus desired that His sacrifice should be continued for all time, in order that all His followers might be able to be present at and draw abundant graces from it. Hence He offered the sacrifice of the Cross also in another form, namely, that of bread and wine. Before He offered Himself on the Cross, He offered Himself in an unbloody manner, under the appearances of bread and wine, at the Last Supper: "This is my body, which is given for you!" "This is my blood of the New Testament,

which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." When Jesus uttered these words, He sacrificed His Body and Blood for us. When He added: "Do this in commemoration of me," He commanded His Apostles and their successors to continue to offer this sacrifice to the end of time.

The Catholic Church has always taught that at the Last Supper Jesus instituted not only a Sacrament, but also a sacrifice. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews (XII, 10) writes: "We have an altar whereof, they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle." [1] Apart from Holy Scripture, this sacrifice is described in the oldest Christian writings. For example, St. Hippolytus, who died about the year 235, wrote: "The precious Body and Blood of Christ is offered up daily on the mysterious table." The early Christians expressed their faith in this sacrifice in the pictures which they left us in the catacombs. The ancient name "host" also points to this faith, for *"hostia"* is a Latin word meaning "sacrifice." The Greek, although it has been separated from the Catholic Church since the second century and for centuries previously stood in the closest relation with the western Church,[2] also has the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

If the Holy Eucharist were not a sacrifice as well as a Sacrament, Christ would not be "a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech" as He is described in Psalm CIX, 4, for Melchisedech had sacrificed bread and wine (Gen. XIV, 18). Again, the prophecy of the Prophet Malachias would not have been fulfilled: "In every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation" (Malach. I, 11).

3. The sacrifice which Jesus instituted at the Last Supper and which is offered constantly since then by the Church, is called

[1] Those who served the tabernacle; that is, the Temple, were the Jews, who did not believe in Jesus, yet clung to the ritual precepts of the Old Testament.

[2] That is, that part of the Western Church which remained faithful to the Pope.

the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is the most beautiful commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross, for in it we have the Sacrifice of the Cross itself. At Holy Mass we first offer to God bread and wine; but at the Consecration, Jesus comes down from Heaven upon the altar, and replaces the bread and wine by His Body and Blood, offering them for us to His Heavenly Father, exactly as He once offered them on the Cross, except that He does not die. Whenever we assist at Holy Mass, we should consider that we are sharing in the Sacrifice of the Cross, that we are, as it were, standing at the foot of the Cross, and see Jesus shedding His Precious Blood for us and dying for us. Therefore, when the priest elevates the Sacred Host at the Consecration, we should exclaim lovingly and gratefully: "Hail, true Body of Jesus Christ, who didst sacrifice Thyself for me on the Cross! With profound humility I adore Thee." And when the priest elevates the Chalice, let us pray: "Hail, Precious Blood of Christ, shed for me on the Cross. In deep humility I adore Thee!"

How great must be the love of Jesus Christ, since, not content with sacrificing Himself for us on Mount Calvary, He continually offers this sacrifice in all lands and at all times!

Who instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper.

What takes place at Holy Mass?

At Holy Mass Jesus Christ offers His body and blood for us to His Heavenly Father.

What is the relation between the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross.

In the Mass the Sacrifice of the Cross is offered in an unbloody manner.

What the Holy Mass Is to a Pious Scholar

John Frederick Henry Schlosser, a learned jurist, who was a convert from Protestantism to the Catholic Church (1851), once

said: "I cannot make anyone understand the infinite consolation my heart receives every day at Holy Mass, this unbloody commemoration of the death of Jesus Christ. All earthly thoughts recede; my moral strength revives like a drooping flower in the morning dew, and I feel the Blood of Christ mysteriously coursing through my soul, rich in graces. I must cry out to all men, nay, to the birds of the air, the leaves on the trees, the rays of the sun, to all that breathes and grows, bidding all creatures to thank the good God who, by His death on the Cross, has redeemed me and made me a child of grace! Through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass I receive from the hands of the Church the certainty that God really and truly dwells among men and in men." [1]

[1] Cfr. Beda Weber, *Charakterbilder,* p. 96.

CHAPTER XVI

The Treasures of Grace Concealed in the Holy Mass

1. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass can be offered only to Almighty God. If it is offered also in honour of the saints, this means that we remember the saints at Holy Mass, thank God for the graces He has bestowed on them, and ask for their intercession.

The Holy Mass is offered by Jesus Christ Himself, acting through the priest as His representative. But those who assist devoutly also share in the offering. For whom is the Holy Sacrifice offered? For those present, for all Catholic Christians, and for the Poor Souls in Purgatory. In a special manner the priest offers it for certain living or departed persons. For doing this, he often receives from the faithful an offering, which we call a stipend. This is in no sense a *price* paid for the Mass, but a contribution to the support of the clergy.

2. Through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we can obtain great and manifold favours from God.

Jesus places himself in our hand, as it were, thus enabling us to offer Him to His Heavenly Father. Through this gift we render God the greatest possible homage and pleasure. The Mass is the most glorious sacrifice of praise. Through the Mass we can thank God most worthily for all His benefits. For we can offer Him His dear Son Jesus Christ in return for His gifts to us. In the eyes of God the Mass is the most acceptable offering of thankgiving.

Through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we can also receive from God forgiveness of our sins and remission of the punishments due to sin. Jesus said: "This is my blood, . . . which

has been shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins." The Blood of Jesus Christ constantly appeals to God for mercy and protection for all sinners. It appeals from the Cross, but it appeals also from the altars on which the same sacrifice is offered. To receive forgiveness, it is true, we must repent and confess our sins; but in Holy Mass we receive the graces of repentance and humility. Thus the Holy Mass is the most efficacious sacrifice of atonement. It is a sacrifice of atonement also for the Poor Souls in Purgatory. In order to alleviate and lessen their sufferings we can do nothing better than offer up, or cause to be offered up, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for them.

Finally through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we can ask God for all the graces and helps we need, above all, the grace to serve God faithfully till the end, and the grace of salvation. Jesus has promised: "Amen, amen I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in my name, it shall be given you" (John XVI, 23). But at no time can we ask for anything so effectively in the name of Jesus as at Holy Mass, when Jesus joins in our petition and sacrifices Himself for us. Thus Holy Mass is the most powerful sacrifice of petition.

3. By His death on the Cross Jesus has opened up to us a source of countless graces. This source flows abundantly in the Mass. The graces which Jesus merited for us on the Cross He imparts to us at Mass. Let us frequent this source of grace as often as possible, so that we may be refreshed and strengthened. Here we can store up an abundance of heavenly treasures if we have a good will and our hearts are sincerely disposed towards God. At Holy Mass we also find the greatest consolation in our anxieties, sufferings, and persecutions. For Jesus, who loves us exceedingly is here, always able and ready to help us. He cries out to us: "Come to me all ye that labour and are burthened, and I will refresh you."

What can we effect with God by offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

By offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to God we (1) give Him the highest honour; (2) thank Him most effectively for His benefits; (3) obtain for ourselves and the Poor Souls in Purgatory remission of sins and of the punishment due to them; (4) obtain the choicest graces for ourselves.

A Conversion Effected through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Father Buis, a missionary in South Shantung, China, tells a story which shows the Holy Mass to be an efficacious sacrifice of petition for the greatest graces. "I once visited a man who was seriously ill in Ishantswin. At my first visit I had to prepare him for holy Baptism. The poor man's legs were paralyzed and the paralysis gradually took possession of his whole body. I found him in despair. It comforted him to hear me express my sympathy, but he was in agony and the thought of a terrible death had already taken possession of him. When I spoke to him of Holy Baptism, it was as though the devil had taken complete hold of him and would not relinquish his prey at any price. The sick man began to curse and blaspheme. "There is no such a being as God," he cried. "If there were, how could He torture me thus cruelly in the prime of my life. I will not be baptized; it is utterly useless." His pagan wife joined in the abuse and expressed the wish that he might soon go to hell! Poor man! Alas, how hard it is for a rich man,—for he was rich,—to tear his heart away from his earthly possessions! My words of comfort were useless; I returned to the chapel unsuccessful, but not without hope. The next morning I said Mass in honour of the most Holy Trinity, offering it for the sick man, and made a special petition to St. Joseph. Suddenly the sick man was carried into the chapel. He who did not believe, who indeed despaired, had found the faith and was finally resigned to God's will. He asked for holy Baptism. As he was sufficiently instructed and near death, I administered to him the Sacrament of regeneration and also Extreme Unction. Then I had to continue my journey, and so I recommended him to the care of his patron saint, St. Joseph, who certainly had proved a faithful advocate of his foster-son.

CHAPTER XVII

The Ceremonies and Prayers of the Mass

THE PREPARATION FOR THE SACRIFICE

1. The Church has surrounded the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with many beautiful and significant ceremonies and prayers. In this she follows the example of Jesus Christ, who offered this Sacrifice with great ceremony at the Last Supper. He observed the significant rites which were associated with the eating of the Paschal lamb, and added new ceremonies. The aim of the prayers and ceremonies used at Holy Mass is to make us realize more fully how great and holy is the Sacrifice of the Mass and induce us to assist at it more devoutly.

Formerly a portion of the prayers at Holy Mass were said alternately by the priest and the congregation; now the congregation is represented by the server or acolyte.

The best manner of assisting at Holy Mass is to attend to each of the separate parts and say the same prayers as the priest and the server. But other prayers may be said, such as, for instance, the Rosary, or pious hymns may be sung, or—a particularly suitable way of assisting at holy Mass—we may meditate on the Passion of Christ. But special attention should be given to the chief parts, the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion, and suitable prayers should be said during all these.

2. The priest begins by reciting certain prayers at the foot of the altar. He prays at the foot of the altar to indicate that he does not feel worthy to ascend the altar. He expresses his

desire to approach God's altar and acknowledges his sinfulness; through the server the congregation also confess their guilt. The priest next asks for forgiveness, for himself and for the people. Then he goes up to the altar and, at the right side, reads the "Introit," that is, "Entrance," from the Missal. This prayer varies from day to day. It is an invitation to celebrate the Mass devoutly, and expresses the disposition with which it should be said, and which varies according to the seasons of the ecclesiastical year. For example, in Advent, the Introit usually expresses longing for the promised Redeemer; *e. g.:* "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just: let the earth be opened and bud forth a Saviour!"

We then again consider our misery and weakness, and the priest, now standing at the middle of the altar, says three times, *"Kyrie eleison"* (Lord, have mercy), to God the Father, the words being repeated by the server; three times *"Christe eleison,"* (Christ, have mercy) to God the Son, and three times *"Kyrie eleison,"* to God the Holy Ghost.

We next consider how merciful God has been to us and how He sent His only begotten Son to redeem us; and the priest chants the hymn first sung by the angels at the birth of Jesus Christ: *"Gloria in excelsis Deo!"* (Glory be to God on high!) thus extolling God's greatness and goodness in inspired words. On days of penance (when the priest wears a purple vestment) and at masses for the dead, the *"Gloria"* is omitted.

After the *Gloria* (or, if the *Gloria* is omitted, directly after the *Kyrie*) the priest turns to the people and says: *"Dominus vobiscum!"* (the Lord be with you!) to which the server answers: *"Et cum spiritu tuo"* (and with thy spirit). Then with outstretched hands, at the right side of the altar, he reads one or more prayers for the intentions of those present. These prayers are called the "Collect" and vary according to the season of the year and the feast. On the feast of the Ascension, for example, the collect is: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty

God, that we who believe Thine only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, to have ascended this day into Heaven, may ourselves also dwell in spirit in heavenly heights; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth in union with the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever, Amen."

3. Instructive lessons from Holy Scripture follow, the first being a lesson from the Books of the Prophets or from the Epistles of the Apostles. On the Feast of Corpus Christi, for example, we read in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians what the Apostle says concerning the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Usually this lesson is called the *"Epistle,"* that is, "letter." During the Epistle the priest lays his hands on the Missal.

Then follows the *"Gospel,"* taken from one of the four Gospels, in which the Apostles and disciples of Jesus describe His life and teachings. As a rule, such passages are chosen as give the actual words spoken by Jesus. For example, on the Feast of Corpus Christi we read what Jesus, after the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes, says about the Heavenly Bread which He intends to give to His followers. Because the Saviour Himself speaks to us in the Gospel, the Missal is carried to the other, the principal, side of the altar, the side that is to the left of the congregation, but on the right of the crucifix above the altar. As a sign of our reverence for the Saviour, and as a proof of our faith in His words and our willingness to obey them, we stand during the Gospel and make the Sign of the Cross.

On Sundays, holydays of obligation, and other important feasts, we expressly testify our faith by reciting the "Credo" or profession of faith immediately after the Gospel. The priest, standing in the middle of the altar, makes a complete profession of faith; those present at the Holy Mass may also recite the Apostles' Creed.

All the prayers and ceremonies described above are calculated

to prepare us for the sacrifice that now follows by filling us with holy thoughts and a desire for heavenly things.

What are the principal parts of the Mass?

The principal parts of the Mass are the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion.

How the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is Treasured in the Catholic Church

Christians have always loved and prized the Mass and have made the greatest sacrifices in order to be able to assist at it. Dionysius of Alexandria, who lived in the third century, when the Christians were bitterly persecuted by the pagans, relates the following: "We did not omit the Holy Ceremony even when we were oppressed and persecuted on all sides. Any spot in which we happened to pass our troubled lives, separated from one another, in the fields, in the desert, or on board a vessel, served us as a temple in which to celebrate the Sacrifice." In Rome the Christians of that time often celebrated the Sacrifice of the Mass in their subterranean burial places (Catacombs). Even here they were in constant danger of being attacked and put to death. But they were not deterred by this danger from assisting at Mass. In 16th century England, under the reign of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, it was forbidden to celebrate or attend Holy Mass and fines or imprisonment were imposed upon those who disobeyed; any person known to have sheltered a priest was punished by death. Yet the Catholics were not deterred from sheltering priests and hearing Mass in garrets and other hidden places.

Many Catholics living in mountainous districts or in pagan countries walk many miles in order to hear Mass on Sunday.

In the World War Holy Mass was celebrated on the field of battle and brought the greatest consolation to the Catholic soldiers. A war chaplain of the Tyrolese archers relates the following: "When my archers have been posted on the cold hill-tops at night, they come down at about three or four o'clock, half frozen, from a height of almost 9000 feet. The projecting branches of the dwarf pines form my confessional. There in a recess a makeshift altar is erected, and they kneel around it. Their limbs are stiff with cold and their clothing torn and dirty after months of hardships in the mountains; but their hearts are warm, and their

eyes are raised with simple piety to their Lord when at the Consecration He is elevated on the altar. Then they receive holy Communion. I was with the archers for three months, and not a day passed on which from twenty to eighty archers of one battalion did not receive Communion. The officers mostly give the men a good example."

It was terribly difficult on the rocky Dolomites to cut trenches into the hard stone. One day a mass was to be said for the archers in the first trench, directly behind the firing line; but the shells of the enemy whistled and burst incessantly over the Tyrolese frontier. The chaplain, standing in the trench, appeared well above the top. The altar was made low down in the trench, and the chaplain celebrated Mass on his knees. The archers also knelt low down and received Holy Communion. Thus, notwithstanding the incessant firing of the French, the Holy Sacrifice was offered up and many of the men received Communion.[1]

[1] *Bonifazius-Kalender,* 1917.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Ceremonies and Prayers of Holy Mass

THE SACRIFICE PROPER

The preparatory ceremonies and prayers are followed by the Sacrifice proper. It consists in the "Offertory" and the actual sacrifice of the Victim, or Consecration.

1. Before the Offertory the priest removes the silk covering from the chalice. A silver, gold-plated paten covers the chalice and on it lies the sacrificial bread or "host." The priest elevates the bread by means of the paten and offers it to God. Then he pours wine and water into the chalice and elevates this also. We who assist at the Mass, offer the bread and wine to God with the priest. Formerly the faithful used to bring their gifts to the altar at the Offertory, and from these the priest selected as much bread and wine as was required for the Sacrifice of the Mass and Communion. Even though this is now no longer customary, we must and should look upon the gifts offered by the priest as our gifts and offer them to God with him. The priest next asks God repeatedly to deign to consecrate these gifts and change them into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, thus preparing a sacrifice worthy of Him. We offer up the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in advance to God, and with Jesus Christ we offer ourselves. For if we possess sanctifying grace, we are one body with Christ (1 Cor. XII, 27). We offer ourselves to God, that is, we tell Him that we wish to belong to Him whole and entire, to serve Him with all our strength, and to do His will in all things. That we should offer ourselves

with Jesus Christ is indicated by the mingling of water with the wine.

After the Offertory follows the *Lavabo,* when the priest washes his hands. This is to remind us that we should assist at the Holy Sacrifice with pure souls, entirely free from sin. This was the lesson which the Saviour wished to teach His Apostles when He washed their feet at the Last Supper.

2. Before Jesus changed the bread and wine into His Body and Blood at the Last Supper, He gave thanks to His Heavenly Father. The priest also, before the Consecration, offers a prayer of thanksgiving to God. This prayer is called the "Preface," that is, the introduction to the Consecration. The Preface concludes with the words of praise: *"Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,"* "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts. Full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory!" The angels in Heaven praise God with these words, as Holy Scripture says (Is. VI, 3; Apoc. IV, 8). To this angelic hymn the priest adds the words with which the multitude greeted Jesus when He entered Jerusalem a short time before His Passion: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!" To remind us that the Saviour will descend upon the altar at the Consecration, a bell is rung at the *"Sanctus."*

After the *"Sanctus"* the priest asks God to accept the sacrifice for the salvation of all who belong to the Church, and in particular for the faithful present and those whom he wishes to favour in a particular manner. This prayer for the living begins with the word, *"Memento,"* in English "Be mindful," *i. e.,* of Thy servants, O Lord, and hence is called the "Commemoration of the Living." The priest invokes the saints in Heaven and, with confidence in their intercession, beseeches God once more to consecrate our sacrificial gifts.

3. Now comes the most sacred moment—the Consecration. God now answers our petitions and sanctifies our sacrifice. In the name of Jesus the priest pronounces over the bread the

words spoken by the Saviour at the Last Supper: "This is my body." At this moment the Son of God comes down from Heaven and conceals Himself under the form of bread. Henceforth *He* is our sacrifice. The priest genuflects, elevates the Sacred Host before all the people, and all bow in adoration. We may say: **"Jesus, I live for thee; Jesus, I die for thee; Jesus, I am thine in life and in death. Hail, true Body of Jesus Christ, sacrificed on the Cross for me! In deepest humility I adore thee!"**

Then the priest pronounces over the wine the words with which Jesus changed wine into His Blood at the Last Supper, and again he genuflects, elevates the chalice before the people, and all once more adore Jesus: **"Jesus be merciful to me! Jesus, pardon my sins! Hail, O precious Blood of Jesus Christ that has been shed for me on the cross! In deepest humility I adore thee."**

Our sacrificial gifts are now sanctified. Not only the bread and the wine, but we ourselves. For we also have offered ourselves as an oblation to God, and we are one body with Jesus Christ, who offers us with Himself. God accepts the sacrifice and lovingly draws us to Himself. We are now more closely united to Him than before.

From the Consecration to the Communion Jesus remains as victim on the altar.

To remind us that the Sacrifice of the Cross is being offered, the priest here repeatedly makes the Sign of the Cross over the sacrificial gifts, at the same time begging God graciously to accept this sacrifice and through it to permit us to attain to salvation. The priest asks this also for those who have died in the faith. This prayer is called the "Commemoration of the Dead."

The prayers from the *Sanctus* to the Commemoration of the Dead are silent. They are called the "Canon" of the Mass, that is, that part which remains unchanged throughout most of the year.

The priest recites the prayers of the Mass not only for himself, but in the name of all who assist at the Holy Sacrifice. All should therefore join in spirit in these prayers.

What the Holy Mass is to Believing Soldiers

In the autumn of 1916, a German lieutenant wrote from the Somme: ". . . For weeks a battle has raged on the Somme. . . . The artillery, with relatively few men, is scattered along the whole front, and in the present situation there is no chance of administering the Sacraments to the men. But our kind chaplain knows how to overcome all obstacles. He came with his van as far as was safe for the precious horses, and proceeded into the midst of the fight through districts where mine after mine was laid, and often ventured into the firing line. And now something sublime and glorious occurs, *viz.:* the celebration of Holy Mass in the midst of a battle. One of the largest shelters was used and everything that might be in the way,—munition cases, rifles, cooking utensils, scabbards, revolvers, knapsacks,—was removed to a distance. At one end of a long, low enclosure, dimly lighted by a taper, stood a simple crucifix. It is as though we were back in the catacombs. The gunners had already received the Sacrament of Penance and now stood, densely massed, waiting to hear Holy Mass. Presently the familiar prayers of the priest could be heard, like the sound of a bell reaching our ears from home—our home on earth and our home in Heaven: *Kyrie eleison, Sursum corda, Agnus Dei,* and on many a countenance the expression of apathy gave way to one of happy, childlike devotion. Hands that were wont to throw grenades or fire guns, now clasped the rosary, and many a soldier fixed his gaze on a pious picture in his prayer-book, given him by a loving mother, perhaps. Their devotion was not disturbed by the trembling of the roof under exploding shells. O Death, where is thy sting? Soon the Lord Jesus will come with Flesh and Blood among His children. Now all were kneeling and the priest went round among the crowded little congregation with the Blessed Sacrament and administered to each his Saviour. *Ite missa est*—a final glance of thanksgiving. Already the battle is on again, the battery is firing, the struggle goes on. But there is a change in the hearts of these men; for now peace and happiness reign within them. They look upon the day as a holy day and all feel like children of one mother, the Holy Church, who spreads her protecting mantle over them."

CHAPTER XIX

The Ceremonies and Prayers of Holy Mass

THE SACRIFICIAL REPAST AND THE CONCLUSION

1. In the Old Testament sacrifices were usually followed by a secret repast. At this repast those who offered sacrifices felt as if they were guests of God. In the Holy Mass, too, the sacrifice is followed by a sacred banquet. God invites us to His table and in His paternal goodness gives us back our gifts after He has sanctified them, and feeds us with the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. It is only thus we can share fully in the graces of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The Communion is preceded by certain preparatory prayers and ceremonies.

First the Lord's Prayer is recited—*"Pater Noster."* In this reference is made to Holy Communion, especially in the petition: "Give us this day our daily bread," namely, the bread of our souls! Grant that we may receive it worthily and that it may be a nourishing food for our souls. The priest expands the last petition, "Deliver us from evil." He asks God to protect us especially from sin, and to bestow upon us both inward and outward peace.

Before Jesus gave the bread to the Apostles, at the Last Supper, He broke it into several pieces. The priest also breaks the Sacred Host into three parts before Communion. This is a reminder that before Jesus could become the food of our souls, He had, as it were, to be broken, tortured, and slain. Therefore the priest makes the Sign of the Cross over the chalice with one

part of the Sacred Host and then lets this part fall into the chalice to indicate that, at the Resurrection, the Body and Blood of Christ were reunited and that both are but one sacrifice.

In remembrance of the death of Christ the priest prays to the Saviour lying on the altar before him: "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us! Grant us peace."

3. Then the priest, bowing low, asks that the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ may insure his salvation and that he (the priest) may never be separated from Jesus. Finally he thrice repeats the words which the pagan centurion spoke to Jesus when He was about to enter his house and heal his sick servant: **"Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."** (The centurion said, "my servant"; Matth. VIII, 8.) At the same time the priest strikes his breast three times as a sign of his unworthiness; a bell is sounded, and he reverently receives the Sacred Host, after which he drinks the Precious Blood from the chalice. This is the priest's Communion.

Formerly all the faithful who were present at Holy Mass received Communion with the priest. The Church desires that this custom should be revived. At least we should receive Holy Communion spiritually, that is, we should elicit a vivid desire to possess Jesus and ask Him to come into our souls in a spiritual manner. Hence we should say with the priest three times: "Lord, I am not worthy," and the following prayer: "O my Jesus! Thou art present in the Sacred Host. I adore Thee. I love Thee with my whole heart. I am sorry that I have offended Thee. My soul longs for Thee. Come to me with Thy grace and remain with me until death."

4. After the Communion the priest recites some prayers of thanksgiving on the Epistle side of the altar. These prayers vary according to the season of the year and the feast. On the

Feast of Corpus Christi, for example, he says: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may be filled with the everlasting fruition of Thy divinity, which is prefigured by the temporal reception of Thy precious Body and Blood."

After the thanksgiving, the priest, standing at the middle of the altar, announces that the sacrifice is over. *"Ite, missa est!"* he says, that is, "Go, you are dismissed!" From the word "dismissal" (*"missa"*) the whole sacrifice is supposed to have its name.

5. Before the faithful depart, the priest blesses all with the words: "May Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, bless you!" He then reads the so-called "Last Gospel" on the gospel side. It is an extract from one of the four Gospels, generally the beginning of the Gospel of St. John, in which he narrates that the Word of God (*i. e.*, the Son of God) was with His Father from all eternity, but that He came down from Heaven, became man, and dwelt among us in order to make us children of God. The concluding words are: "And the Word was made flesh [here all genuflect], and dwelt among us; and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In the Mass the Word of God has once again come down from Heaven, dwelt among us, and brought grace and truth into our hearts. The server answers: *"Deo gratias!"* ("Thanks be to God!")

The more we understand the ceremonies and prayers of the Mass, and the more devoutly we join in them, the more we realize how beautiful they are, and that the Holy Mass is a sublime work of art created by the Holy Ghost.

The Mass and Communion as Divine Sources of Strength

French Jesuit missionaries in Tritchinopli, India, give an account of the marvellous conversion and deeply religious life of a distinguished Brahmin lady.[1] When this woman was ten years old,

[1] Brahmins are the highest Hindu caste, the caste of priests, though not all of them exercise priestly functions.

she was betrothed to a young Brahmin, who took her to his house when she was sixteen. The young husband had made his studies in the Jesuit College and successfully passed an important state examination. At first a discontented Brahmin, he later became convinced of the truth of the Catholic religion and converted his gifted young wife. She was baptized with him and received the name Anna Maria. When they were catechumens,[1] and abandoned the pagan ceremonies, a storm burst forth, which reached its climax when the parents of Anna Maria heard that their daughter had been baptized. Her mother cunningly enticed her back to her parental home with her first-born child, and kept her there in strict captivity for five months. Flattery, threats, harsh treatment—all means were tried to induce her to apostatize; but she remained firm. When her husband came to get her, he was driven off with abuse and insults. Finally, when her parents were about to take her to a distant place, where they believed the power of Baptism would be "extinguished" by an abominable pagan ceremony, the young husband succeeded in taking her and the child by force from the train and bringing them home. Now Anna Maria became the leader of a Christian congregation who gradually gathered round her home. Immeasurable blessings resulted from her noble example and zeal; the missionaries affirm that she did more than ten men could do to spread the Catholic religion. She bore bravely the trials which God sent her, especially the death of her only son.

"If you ask me," writes Fr. Billard, "whence Anna Maria obtains the strength and courage to live a life of such heroic Christian virtue and self-sacrifice, I answer unhesitatingly,—from her great love of the Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament. The moment she began to understand the mystery of the tabernacle, her soul found a firm resting-place. Holy Mass and frequent—almost daily—Communion are her greatest happiness and the true source of her strength. When I see her come to Holy Communion day after day, with her two faithful companions, Rosammal, the wife of Ramaswamys, a friend of her husband, and Gondammal, the faithful helper of our nursing sisters, I always feel that I must thank the Lord for having entrusted such noble souls to our care, and ask Him to send us many more like them."

[1] Pagans preparing for Baptism by getting instruction and leading a Christian life are called catechumens. In India the time for preparation is usually a year; in other missions two or three years.

CHAPTER XX

Language and Vestments Used at Mass

1. Holy Mass is not said in the vernacular, but in Latin. In a small part of the Church it is said in Old Slavonic or some other ancient tongue. The Church sticks to these ancient tongues to show how ancient and reverent the Sacrifice of the Mass is and also for the reason that she does not want to have the traditional prayers altered. Spoken languages are constantly changing, and if the Missal were written in one of these, it would have to be changed every fifty or one hundred years.

In by far the greater part of the world Holy Mass is said in Latin. In this way the Latin or Western Church has one common language. The Pope corresponds in this language with the bishops and priests. This promotes the unity of the Church. If the Mass were said in the vernacular of each country, Latin would go out of use in the Church and the Church would no longer have a common language and the unity of the faithful might be endangered.

The prayers of the Mass are well known to the faithful, for many prayerbooks contain them in both Latin and English. The Church desires the faithful to use these prayers, if possible, in the original Latin, so that they may be enabled to "pray the Mass with the priest" (Pius X).

2. When celebrating Mass, the priest wears over his usual clerical cassock certain ceremonial vestments, as a reminder that a sacred and supernatural action is taking place at the altar. Each one of these vestments has its peculiar significance. The *alb,* a long write robe, indicates purity of soul. The *maniple,*

which the priest wears over his left arm and which was originally a handkerchief for wiping away sweat, indicates that he must not shirk any labour for God. The *stole,* the broad silk strip which the priest wears on his shoulders, indicates the sacerdotal office, which rests on him like a sacred burden. The *chasuble,* worn on top of the other vestments, is the vestment proper for the Holy Sacrifice. It usually has on it the form of a large cross, to remind us of Christ crucified, whose sacrifice is renewed by the priest.

Vestments of different colours are used according to the seasons of the year and the different holydays. White signifies innocence and festive joy; red, the ardour of charity and the blood shed for Christ; green, the hope in eternal life; purple (or rather ash colour), penance; black, mourning.

Thus everything connected with the Mass has a deep significance; the more we learn to understand this significance, the more we shall be edified and the more effectively our souls will be elevated to God.

Why does the Church use the Latin language in the Mass?

The Church uses the Latin Language in the Mass because this language is unchangeable, and because it is the official language of the whole Church and a mark of her unity.

How an Unhappy Catholic Who had Lost the Faith Finally Obtained Peace

William von Kügelgen, the painter (d. 1867), who was a zealous Lutheran, in his "Recollections" relates that his father, though raised a Catholic, had become indifferent towards his religion when he reached manhood and married a Protestant woman, promising that all the children should be allowed to follow their mother's faith. He continues: "My father's heart gradually yearned for the revealed faith and his memory took him back to the happy days of his childhood, when he used to go to Mass with his mother and found good impulses and consolation in the blessings of the Church.

It was natural that, with the spiritual desire reawakened within him, he should be drawn to the same place where he had formerly found heavenly blessings. Thus he began to go to Mass again, tentatively at first, then more frequently, and finally, in his last years, every morning. The needs of his heart led him to discover a spiritual adviser in the person of a worthy and highly esteemed priest, Father Mende, to whom he gladly entrusted himself for spiritual guidance. Thus he again became a practical member of the Catholic Church. . . . He felt the joy of one who, after a long separation, once more enters the paternal home and finds everything unchanged. He was often heard to say how wonderful it was that, while the whole world had become modernized since his youth, and Protestantism had also been caught in the tide of change, the Catholic Church alone had remained unaltered. My father found that Church exactly as she was when he abandoned her, not only in her dogmas, constitution, and worship, but even in the vestments worn by the priest and every movement made at the altar. He felt there was no room for doubt that the eternal, unchangeable, revealed Truth, enthroned high above the fickleness of human taste and human thoughts, had found its only adequate form in the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER XXI

The Effects of Holy Communion in the Soul

1. God desires to bestow upon our souls, besides the natural, a higher, supernatural life. He gave us this supernatural life, called sanctifying grace, at Baptism. If we have lost it through mortal sin, we can regain it by worthily receiving the Sacrament of Penance. In order to preserve this supernatural life of the soul it must be nourished just as the natural life by suitable food. Jesus in His infinite love has given us as food for our souls His crucified Body and His Blood shed for us on the Cross. He said: "The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John VI, 52). We receive this Bread in Holy Communion.

Through the reception of the Sacred Body of Jesus Christ the supernatural life, *i. e.*, sanctifying grace within us, grows stronger and stronger, until it finally passes into eternal life. Jesus says: "As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me" (John VI, 58). But if we do not eat this Bread of the soul, the supernatural life will die within us, and we shall also lose eternal life. For Jesus said: "Amen, amen I say unto you, **except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you"** (John VI, 54).

2. In what way does this Bread of the soul affect us?

When we receive the Sacred Host, Jesus invisibly enters our soul and unites Himself with us most intimately. Hence the reception of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is called "Communion," that is, incorporation. As iron is penetrated by fire

until it becomes glowing and bright itself, so our souls become penetrated by the Divinity of Jesus and luminous with beauty. Jesus increases sanctifying grace in the soul, thereby giving us a claim to the higher happiness of Heaven. At the same time our souls are filled with burning love for Him. Even when Jesus is no longer in us with His Flesh and Blood, His grace remains, and with it His love, and they maintain within us a deep love for Him. For He said: **"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, shall abide in me, and I in him"** (John VI, 57).

Our love for Jesus gives us zeal and strength to do all that He asks of us and to resist temptations. Therefore we do not easily fall into mortal sin after receiving Holy Communion. The oftener we receive the Bread of life, the stronger will our love for Jesus become, the more will our evil inclinations be weakened, the farther removed we shall be from mortal sin, and the surer is our eternal salvation. For Jesus says: **"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the last day"** (John VI, 55).

There is nothing that so effectively protects us against sin or makes our eternal salvation so secure as *frequent Communion.* It is the most efficacious means by which sinners can rid themselves of their evil inclinations. Our venial sins will be obliterated in Holy Communion if we repent of them.

3. Jesus did not expressly say how often we should receive His Body and Blood to obtain eternal life. But by calling His Body bread, and giving it the form of bread, He showed that we should receive Him often. As we feed the body daily, so, too, we should nourish the soul frequently. Experience shews that the full efficacy of Holy Communion is obtained only by those who receive it frequently, if possible every day.

The Church enjoins upon us, under pain of grievous sin, to receive Holy Communion *at least* once a year, at Easter time,

and before death, as Viaticum for the journey to eternity; but it is her urgent desire that we should communicate much oftener. Every person who is in earnest about his soul's salvation should make it a rule to receive Holy Communion at least once a month, preferably on the first Friday or the first Sunday.

The Church extols the infinite riches and the heavenly bliss which Holy Communion holds for us in these words: "Thou didst feed thy people with the food of angels, and gavest them bread from heaven prepared without labour; having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste" (Wisd. XVI, 20).

What does Holy Communion effect in us?

Holy Communion unites us to Jesus and increases sanctifying grace in us; it strengthens the love of God and keeps us from mortal sin; finally, it assures our eternal salvation.

The Lord of Glory
(Oh, wondrous story!)
Hath made His home within my breast;
Bowed down before Him,
My soul, adore Him,
Who 'neath Thy roof vouchsafes to rest.
Good angels aid me,
The God who made me,
Who died to save me,
Is now my Guest.
Ah! Softly sing Him
Sweet songs, and bring Him
Your burning love, your worship blest.

The Manna of the New Testament

When God had miraculously freed the Israelites—at that time His chosen people—from the bondage of Egypt, they had to wander about in the desert for forty years and endured many hardships, before they were permitted to enter Chanaan, the "Promised Land"

of their forefathers, later called Palestine. During their wanderings God fed them with manna, savoury white food which fell from Heaven abundantly every morning until they had entered the Promised Land. When they saw this bread for the first time, they cried out, full of wonder: "Man-hu?" (What is that?") Hence the name "manna." Even after many centuries the people remembered this miraculous food with gratitude and praised God, saying: "Thou gavest thy people bread from heaven, having in it the sweetness of every taste" (Wisd. XVI, 20).

The manna was but the symbol of the even more wonderful Bread of Heaven that God gave His people in the New Testament in the Blessed Sacrament. Every day this Bread comes down from Heaven upon the altar at Holy Mass, and brings to our souls a foretaste of the joy of Heaven, and comforts and strengthens us mightily in our trials and struggles, until our wanderings through this earthly desert are ended and we stand at the gate of our promised land,—Heaven. Christians today can sing with much more justification than the Israelites of old: "Thou gavest them bread from heaven, having in it the sweetness of every taste."

The Viaticum of Elias the Prophet

By another simile God foreshadowed in the Old Testament the strength we receive from Holy Communion. The prophet Elias reproached King Achab for his wickedness and idolatry and predicted that there would be no rain in the land for three years and six months. The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. The King and the people acknowledged their wrong, but the Queen, Jezabel, refused to do penance, and persecuted Elias. The prophet had to flee to the desert, where he grew despondent and wished he was dead. He lay down and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said: "Arise and eat!" Elias looked round and saw a loaf and a pitcher of water beside him. He ate and drank, then lay down and slept again. And the angel of the Lord came once more, touched him and said: "Arise and eat, for thou hast far to go." He stood up and ate and drank again, and thus obtained strength to walk twenty days and twenty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.[1] Then God appeared to him.

[1] Near this mountain God had appeared to Moses in a burning bush; on this mountain He had given the Ten Commandants, for Horeb is the same as Mount Sinai.

For us the mountain to which we must all go, and where God will appear to us, is Heaven. The road that leads thither is long and difficult; but God, who prepared a repast for the prophet Elias that gave Him strength for his journey, has prepared a still more wonderful repast for us. It consists of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. When we receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, we obtain strength to walk confidently on the road to Heaven. But we must partake of the repast frequently.

Blessed Nicholas von der Flüe

Many saints have found the Blessed Sacrament to be food not only for their souls, but also for their bodies. It was thus with a Swiss hermit, Blessed Nicholas von der Flüe, known as Brother Klaus. He was born in 1417 of pious peasant parents near Sachseln, Canton Obwalden. In early youth he was drawn to solitude that he might belong to God alone. But at the wish of his parents he espoused a God-fearing maid. God blessed this marriage with five sons and five daughters, who were all a credit to their parents. Several of the sons were called to high offices. Nicholas himself was elected judge and governor of the Canton (Landamtmann); but he refused the latter position. When he was fifty years old, he felt the call of God and, after his wife had reluctantly consented, left hearth and home and went to a deserted ravine, where a chapel and a little cell were built for him. Here Klaus engaged in prayer and meditation. On Sundays and holydays he went barefooted and bareheaded to the parish church at Sachseln, about four miles distant, received Holy Communion once a month, and, apart from this, never ate or drank anything from the moment he became a hermit until his death, twenty years later (1487). This miracle became widely known, but many declared it to be a fraud. The government of the Canton made an investigation. The whole district as well as Brother Klaus's cell were occupied by a strong guard and the hermit was completely cut off from intercourse with the people. The miracle was confirmed. Later the Bishop of Constance sent his auxiliary to examine into the matter on the occasion of the consecration of the hermit's chapel. The prelate spent half a day in conversation with Brother Klaus in his cell. At last he asked him which virtue appeared to him the most important. Brother Klaus answered, "I think obedience." Then the bishop took a piece of bread which he had brought with him, broke it into three

parts, and commanded him to eat it and to drink some wine as a proof of his obedience toward the ecclesiastical authorities. Nicholas reluctantly ate a tiny piece of bread and drank a little wine; whereupon he was attacked by such severe cramps that the people feared for his life. The bishop begged his pardon and declared before all present that he had been obliged to test the servant of God in this way by command of his superior, but was now perfectly convinced that his life was miraculously sustained by the Holy Eucharist.

Asked by his parish priest whence he obtained his strength, Brother Klaus answered: "When I assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and see the priest partake of the heavenly Repast, or partake of it myself, an ocean of spiritual sweetness and strength is poured into my soul and thence flows into my body. Therefore I neither hunger nor thirst for earthly food. The Body and Blood of Christ is my only food; from this I obtain all my strength."

Switzerland is specially grateful to this man of God because he saved the confederacy—then not long in existence—from civil war and consequent destruction. The Cantons had quarrelled at their assembly at Stans (1481) over the division of the spoils taken in the war with Burgundy and over the admission of two towns, Fribourg and Solothurn, and there was grave danger that they might go to war. The parish priest of Stans hastened to Brother Klaus to ask his help. The latter came out of his cell and, after a four hours' walk, appeared at the meeting, where he was received with the greatest respect. He spoke so convincingly of the necessity of peace that, without opposition, they agreed to his proposals and were completely reconciled.

On the 21st of March, 1487, Brother Klaus died a holy death. The whole confederacy mourned for him. God exalted His servant by many miracles. Soon after his death he was publicly invoked and in the year 1669 he was beatified. His feast is commemorated on the 22nd of March. The parish church of Sachseln, where he is buried, is a much visited shrine. Many pilgrims also visit his cell, which has been preserved to the present day.

CHAPTER XXII

How to Prepare for Holy Communion

HOW TO OFFER THANKSGIVING

Holy Communion is efficacious only when received *worthily.*

1. To receive Holy Communion worthily we must first of all be free from mortal sin. Jesus will not enter a soul in which Satan reigns. St. Paul exhorts us: "Let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice" (1 Cor. XI, 28). Before receiving Holy Communion, therefore, let us examine our conscience to discover whether we are guilty of mortal sin, and if we find we are, let us go to confession before we approach the altar railing. In such a case we may not be content with perfect contrition, but must go to confession.

Any person who receives Holy Communion when he knows he is in the state of mortal sin, commits a sacrilege. St. Paul writes: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For **he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment [i. e., damnation] to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord"**; that is, he does not distinguish this heavenly Bread from ordinary food (1 Cor. XI, 27–29). Of course, forgiveness can be obtained for this sin by having true sorrow and by doing penance. But an unworthy Communion can result in such hardening of the heart that a person may never repent and consequently be lost for ever.

Before Communion we should also, as far as is possible, cleanse our souls from venial sins by confession or at least by an act of contrition and true repentance.

2. To receive Communion worthily we should pray fervently beforehand, and consider the great honour Jesus is about to bestow on us. To help us in this we may consider the following questions: **Who is coming to me?** (Jesus, my Lord and my God.—O Jesus, I believe in Thee! Jesus, I adore Thee!) **To whom is Jesus coming?** (To me, a poor, sinful creature.—O Jesus, I am not worthy of Thy favour. I am sorry for my sins!) **Why does Jesus come to me?** (Because He loves me and wants to give me life.—O Jesus, I trust in thy goodness! I love Thee above all things! My soul thirsts for Thee!)

It is best to receive Holy Communion during Mass, and to make the above preparation before Holy Mass and join as much as possible in the prayers said by the priest. For Jesus did not institute Holy Communion apart from the Mass, but as a sacrificial repast essentially connected with it.

It is strictly forbidden to take any food or drink from midnight on. This so-called Eucharistic fast has been ordained out of respect for the Food of our souls. Only those who are dangerously ill are exempted from this law. Those also who have been confined to their bed for a month or more may, with their confessor's consent, take some liquid before Holy Communion once or twice a week.

We should approach the table of the Lord in strictly modest dress.

3. Directly before Communion we kneel down at the altar rails. When the server recites the "Confiteor," we should renew our contrition. The priest turns towards us and asks God to pardon us. Then he elevates the Sacred Host before us, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world," and we humbly adore Our Saviour. Then the priest says three times: **"O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter**

under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed!" We should repeat these words with the priest, at the same time striking ourselves thrice on the breast. Then we should raise our heads, open our mouths properly, and rest the tip of the tongue on the under lip. We should either cast down our eyes or look at the Sacred Host. The priest now lays the Sacred Host on our tongue saying: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul to everlasting life." We then slowly draw back the tongue and reverently swallow the Sacred Host. If it should stick to the roof of the mouth, we should loosen it with the tongue, never with the finger.

4. We then return to our places with eyes cast down, kneel and converse with our Saviour with all the love of which we are capable. We should first greet Him humbly, adore Him, thank Him, offer ourselves to Him, and promise to be faithful to Him always; then we should ask Him to give us the grace to do this, and make known to Him our wants. Generally speaking, this "thanksgiving" after Holy Communion should last at least ten minutes.

On the day we have received Communion we should often recall the grace bestowed upon us by the Saviour and take pains to become more and more like Him. "He that saith he [Jesus] abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked" (1 John II, 6).

The more carefully we prepare for Holy Communion and the more devout our thanksgiving is, the greater graces we shall obtain from Holy Communion.

What is meant by receiving Holy Communion unworthily?

To receive Holy Communion unworthily is to receive it while conscious of mortal sin.

What should we do immediately after Holy Communion?

After Holy Communion we should adore Jesus and thank Him; we should offer ourselves to Him and present our petitions to Him.

St. Aloysius's Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament

St. Aloysius regarded the Blessed Sacrament as the centre and the sun of his life. He assisted at Mass every day. At the Consecration he was seized by the deepest emotion, which vented itself in copious tears. It gave him great joy to serve at Mass. Every day he made many visits to the Blessed Sacrament. He received Holy Communion every week. In order to prepare himself worthily and to return thanks, he divided the week into two parts. The first part he spent in thanksgiving for the last Communion, the second part in preparation for the following one. On the day before he used to speak with touching piety of the happiness to which he looked forward. Many of his brothers in the Society of Jesus, some of them priests, used to try to be near him in order that they might be inspired by his piety and the ardour of his love to greater devotion and better preparation for the celebration of Holy Mass. The morning St. Aloysius was to receive Communion, his first thought was of the Saviour who was coming to him. He spent an hour in pious meditation on the Blessed Sacrament. After receiving Communion, he sought out a quiet corner of the church to make his thanksgiving. His heart overflowed with consolation and tears of joy ran down his cheeks. Those who saw him were deeply moved. He spent the forenoon as far as possible in silence, always returning to Jesus in his thoughts.

Thus St. Aloysius received abundant graces from the Blessed Sacrament and from Holy Communion. He preserved an angelic purity and, while still in his youth, reached the perfect holiness that we so admire in him.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Necessity of Confirmation

1. When the young Christian grows up, his soul's salvation is threatened by ever greater dangers. The evil inclinations we have inherited from our First Parents become stronger with increasing age. Further, we see so many going the broad and easy way that leads to destruction, that we are strongly tempted to follow their example. Many even set out directly to lead us into sin. Efforts are made to alienate us from the faith and to separate us entirely from Jesus. Ridicule is the weapon mostly used for this purpose. The devil makes use of the dangerous position in which we are placed and redoubles his efforts to plunge us into sin and destruction. Hence we must fight a hard fight for our souls and our salvation,—a fight against three enemies, the flesh (our evil inclinations), the world, and the devil.

2. In order that we may fight this battle with courage and perseverance, remain faithful to Jesus, and save our souls, the Holy Ghost wishes to give us special strength. On the Feast of Pentecost He descended upon the Apostles and strengthened them for the approaching conflict against the Jewish and the pagan world and against the gates of hell. In the same way He desires to come to our assistance and to make us brave soldiers of Christ. The Sacrament instituted for this purpose is called "Confirmation," that is "strengthening," "fortifying."

3. Children who have not yet attained to the use of reason, do not need the Sacrament of Confirmation. But older children and adults require the special assistance of the Holy Ghost

which is given in Confirmation. Any Catholic who neglects to receive Confirmation commits a sin and endangers his soul. It is best to receive Confirmation at the age of ten or eleven years, one or two years after one's first Holy Communion. Any person who was not confirmed when young, should receive this Sacrament as soon as possible.

How the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles and what He effects in the human heart, may be seen in Chapters 21 and 22, *supra.*

Youthful Heroes

On February 5th, 1597, twenty-six Christians—priests, religious, and lay persons,—were crucified for their faith in Nagasaki, Japan. Among these were three boys, Louis, ten years old, Antony thirteen, and Thomas fourteen. They used to serve at Mass and belonged to the Third Order of St. Francis.[1] Radiant with joy, the three boys went to martyrdom. As soon as they saw the crosses, they hastened their steps. Louis chose the smallest cross. When he came to it, he kissed it, and at once lay down upon it. Scarcely were all the crosses raised up, when Fr. Peter Baptist, the leader of the glorious band, began to intone the *Te Deum.* All joined in with loud voices. During the *Te Deum,* Fr. Peter went into an ecstasy, from which he only awoke in the next life. He looked up to Heaven fixedly and hung rigidly on the cross until his heart was pierced by a lance. He had promised the three boys who were near him that while on the cross he would intone the psalm, *"Laudate pueri Dominum!"* (Children, praise ye the Lord!) and sing it to the end with them. They had practised it long and loved it. Now when the *Te Deum* was finished, the boys waited for Fr. Peter to intone the Psalm. But he did not awaken from his ecstasy. Then little Antony took courage, intoned the Psalm himself, and with angelic voices the three children sang: "Praise the Lord, ye children! Praise ye the name of the Lord!"

Little Antony was unable to finish the *"Gloria Patri,"* before he

[1] St. Francis of Assisi founded one order for men, a second for women, and a third for persons living in the world. But here and there members of the Third Order have become enclosed and live together in religious communities.

received the death stroke. But Louis finished the Psalm; and now, having resolved to die singing, and not knowing what he should sing next, he turned to Fr. Peter, who hung on the cross beside him, rapt in ecstasy. Louis, obedient even till death, wanted to ask the priest which Psalm he should sing now? But at the moment he turned his head, his heart was pierced by a lance, and his innocent soul ascended to God. Only ten months before he had become a Christian; now he was a saint in Heaven.

The firmness and joy with which these young boys suffered martyrdom was ascribed to the Sacrament of Confirmation, which had been administered to them only a few months before by Bishop Martinez, S.J. [1]

[1] *Kath. Missionen,* 1897, p. 250.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Origin of Confirmation—Its Effects

1. After the Apostles had been strengthened by the Holy Ghost, they imparted this strengthening to the other Christians. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that Philip the Deacon preached in the town of Samaria and that all the people believed in Christ, whereupon they were baptized by Philip. When the Apostles heard this, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. These two prayed over the neophytes, and laid their hands upon them, whereupon the neophytes received the Holy Ghost. We also read in the Acts how St. Paul baptized twelve men in the city of Ephesus, and then laid his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them. The Apostles could not have imparted the Holy Ghost to the Christians if they had not received the power to do so from Jesus Christ.

2. We know from many ancient accounts that the successors of the Apostles, the bishops, imparted the Holy Ghost to the faithful at the very beginning of the Church. St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who was martyred in 258, wrote: "Those who have been baptized, are presented to the bishops, who pray over them and lay their hands upon them. Their conversion is thus completed by the seal of faith." St. Jerome says: "It is customary for the bishop to visit the churches in distant towns and, laying his hands on the neophytes, to invoke the Holy Ghost." St. Augustine writes: "The Sacrament of Confirmation, among the visible signs, is just as holy as Baptism."

Thus there can be no doubt that the Catholic Church received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Jesus Christ Himself. This

is further proved by the fact that those churches which fell away from the centre of unity centuries ago, *e. g.*, the Greek Church, have retained Confirmation. If Confirmation had been introduced into the Catholic Church only after the rupture, the separated churches would never have accepted it.

3. From what has been said it follows that Confirmation is a Sacrament, that is, an outward sign which bestows grace upon the soul. The outward sign consists in the bishop laying his hand on the person to be confirmed, anointing him with the holy chrism, and saying at the same time: "I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

This rite has the following effects: The Holy Ghost enters the soul with the fulness of His graces and gifts, strengthens its supernatural life, and increases sanctifying grace. He provides us with strength to resist the threefold enemy who endeavours to snatch us from Jesus Christ. He gives us special strength to confess the faith and to live according to its dictates, regardless of what the world may say. Thus the Holy Ghost impresses a kind of seal on our souls, by which we are made soldiers of Christ. St. Paul says: "[It is] God who also hath sealed us, and given us the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. I, 21–22). This seal can never be effaced from our souls; therefore we are bound to fight for Jesus Christ and always receive from the Holy Ghost special strength for this purpose. Hence it is not necessary to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation more than once; to attempt to do so would be a mortal sin and render the rite itself invalid.

4. Through Baptism we become Christians and the higher, supernatural life begins in us. But this life has not yet reached its full strength; we are still children, supernaturally speaking. The supernatural life in its perfection is breathed into our souls only at Confirmation; then we are, as it were, full-grown

Christians, armed for the struggle of life. No one should defer the acquisition of this full life and strength.

What happens at Confirmation?

At Confirmation the Holy Ghost enters into us.

What does the Holy Ghost effect within us at Confirmation?

At Confirmation the Holy Ghost strengthens us, so that we may keep the faith and profess it resolutely; He makes us soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Effects of Confirmation

Father Judge, S.J., gives the following account of the special effects of Confirmation on his Indian neophytes in Alaska: "Ten grown-up girls have returned home from the school of the Holy Cross Mission. They are a real credit to the Sisters, so great is the change effected in them by a few years at school. They speak English fluently, they have made their first Holy Communion, and have received Confirmation; they are very good and zealous girls. Immediately after their arrival it struck me that they professed their faith far more courageously and openly than the girls who had returned in previous years. The reason for this difference only now occurs to me,—they were the first to return who had received the Sacrament of Confirmation. It was only the winter previous that Fr. Tosi had been empowered by the Holy Father to administer this Sacrament. Never before had I realized its effects so clearly, and I sincerely thank the Holy Ghost for having revealed the power of His grace in these children, the first to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, to their own salvation as well as to the edification of all who see them."

CHAPTER XXV

How We Should Prepare Ourselves for Confirmation —How the Sacrament Is Administered

1. The Apostles and disciples of Jesus spent the ten days between the Ascension and Pentecost in constant prayer, asking God to send them the Holy Ghost. Those who are to be confirmed should also spend time before the reception of the Sacrament asking for the Holy Ghost and His strength, especially by reciting the third glorious mystery of the Rosary and the following prayer: "Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful," etc. They should also be particularly zealous in the performance of good works during the time that precedes Confirmation and guard themselves more carefully than ever against sin. He that desires to be confirmed should also be well instructed in the faith.

When receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation we should at least be free from mortal sin. For this reason we should receive the Sacrament of Penance before Confirmation. It is recommended to make a general confession on this occasion, in order thoroughly to put our house in order and to offer an entirely pure heart to the Holy Ghost. Before Confirmation it is customary to receive Holy Communion, in order to ask Jesus to send the Holy Ghost with His manifold graces into our souls. Directly before Confirmation we should excite ourselves to an act of contrition for our sins.

2. If possible, the *confirmandus* should be accompanied by a godfather or godmother. The godparents are in a sense responsible for the person to be confirmed, for his remaining true to his faith and professing it courageously. Therefore they

are bound, if necessary, to see to it that he leads a good Christian life. As a sign that they undertake this duty, they lay the right hand on the right shoulder of the person to be confirmed, while the Sacrament is being administered.

Only Catholics may be godparents at Confirmation; moreover, they must be zealous, not lukewarm Catholics; they should be confirmed themselves and of mature age. The same person may not be sponsor at Baptism and at Confirmation.

The sponsor contracts a spiritual relationship with the godchild.

3. Confirmation is given in the following manner: The bishop stands before those to be confirmed, stretches his hands over them, and invokes the Holy Ghost. He then lays his hand on the head of each and anoints him on the forehead with the holy chrism in the form of a cross, saying: "I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He then gives the person to be confirmed a gentle stroke on the cheek with two fingers, saying: "Peace be with you!" Finally the bishop again prays over those confirmed and gives them his blessing.

The holy chrism is composed of the oil of olives and balsam, which are mixed and consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday. The oil indicates that the grace of the Holy Ghost shall penetrate as easily as oil the souls of those to be confirmed. In ancient times the gladiators used to make their limbs strong and pliable with oil. The person to be confirmed is to be strengthened by chrism for the spiritual combat. The balsam indicates that those to be confirmed shall be preserved from the corruption of sin and exhale a pleasing odour of virtue before God. The bishop anoints them on the forehead to signify that they shall profess their faith openly and fearlessly.

The words of the bishop, "I sign thee," etc., indicate that the bishop impresses on the soul of the *confirmandus* the seal

of the crucified Saviour, that he consecrates him as a soldier of Christ, and imparts to him strength from the Holy Ghost.

The stroke on the cheek indicates that the person confirmed must be ready to suffer insult, persecution, nay, even death, rather than be unfaithful to Jesus. Through such fidelity and constancy he will obtain that interior peace which Jesus has promised to His followers (John XIV, 27).

4. After Confirmation the confirmed should return fervent thanks to the Holy Ghost for having come to him with His grace. He should also promise to remain faithful to his Saviour. He should spend the day in quiet recollection and prayer. We should all often recollect what we have received in Confirmation and ask the Holy Ghost to renew this grace within us.

If the godparent desires to give a souvenir, it should be some such suitable one as a crucifix, a rosary, or an edifying book, *e. g.*, a prayer book, a Catholic edition of the Gospels, or the life of some saint. Worldly gifts often have the effect of drawing the heart away from spiritual things and thus fostering vanity and covetousness.

What responsibility does the godparent at Confirmation undertake?

The godparent undertakes the responsibility of seeing that the person confirmed leads a Christian life.

CHAPTER XXVI

Why We Should Profess Our Faith Courageously

Jesus has said: "He that shall confess me before men, I shall also confess him before my Father who is in Heaven" (Matthew X, 32). Our Divine Saviour expects those who are confirmed to profess their faith in Him by word and deed.

1. We have no reason to be ashamed of our Catholic faith; on the contrary, we have every reason to be proud of it; for our faith is certainly true. We have the most reliable proofs of this.

Jesus Christ showed by His holy life as well as by His miracles and prophecies that He spoke the truth. The Catholic Church was founded by Him and has His support and that of the Holy Ghost. Therefore we are certain that it teaches us the truth.

On the other hand, infidels do not feel certain in their unbelief. They can doubt and criticize, but they have nothing to take the place of faith. One of the most learned of these, Alexander von Humboldt (d. 1859), wrote towards the end of his long life: "Life is sheer nonsense. If one has worked and studied for eighty years, one must in the end admit that one has accomplished nothing and discovered nothing. If only we knew, at least, why we are in this world!" Thus it is with infidels to the present day, notwithstanding all the progress made in science and technique.

Unbelief impresses us still less when we consider what are its chief causes. Some persons are infidels through pride, as were the high priests, scribes and Pharisees in the time of

Christ; they do not want to submit to the Church or even to God; they would like to be gods themselves. Others refuse to believe because they are leading a sinful life. Jesus says: "Everyone that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved" (John III, 20). Others again will not believe because of indifference or ignorance. They are entirely taken up with worldly affairs; they do not trouble themselves about the things of Heaven and are ignorant of them.

Nor need we envy non-Catholic Christians, especially Protestants. For the greatest disunion and chaos reigns in their midst. Many of their best men and women have come over to the Catholic Church and felt exceedingly happy within its pale.

Therefore we have every reason to rejoice in our holy religion; only an ignorant Catholic can feel ashamed of his faith.

2. We have no reason, either, to fear to profess our faith. Infidels may ridicule us, but it is only the ignorant and rude who do this, and we can afford to ignore them. They will cease ridiculing us if they see that we are firm. Perhaps our position or income may suffer through our fidelity to the faith. But God is rich enough and generous enough to compensate us for our sacrifices. Jesus tells us: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matth. V, 10). And even if we should suffer death for our faith, this would be a great gain, for we should then be martyrs, enter Heaven at once, and receive a glorious reward. Jesus has promised: "He that shall lose his life for me, shall find it" (Matth. X, 39). Let us fear nothing, therefore, but be brave soldiers of Christ, like the holy Apostles and martyrs.

3. One of the most important means—especially for young people—of remaining constant in the faith, is to join some Catholic society. Those who stand alone are mostly exposed to the ridicule and hostility of the enemies of our faith. "Woe to

him that is alone" (Eccles. IV, 10). If, on the other hand, we associate with noble-minded fellow-Catholics of firm character, we can smile at the efforts of our opponents to make us waver in our faith. More likely they will not even make the attempt. Catholic societies usually also provide their members with good reading, organize suitable lectures on religious questions, lead their members regularly to the communion railing, and induce them to help one another in every way. Very often a young person's temporal and eternal happiness depends on his or her joining a Catholic society early in life.

A Christian Heroine of Ancient Days

When there is question of fighting for Christ, the women may not lag behind. In the courageous profession of faith they have proved themselves equal to men, nay, often surpassed them. A famous example in the early days was St. Perpetua, a distinguished lady who lived in Carthage (Africa). When only twenty-two years old, she was cast into prison with other Christians because of her faith. At this time her father was still a pagan. When he heard that his daughter was in prison, he implored her to give up her religion, saying: "Have pity on my grey hairs! Do not expose me to shame. In the name of your brothers, your mother, and your little child, I entreat you not to ruin us by your obstinacy! For who of us will dare appear in public if you are condemned to death?" He kissed his daughter's hands and even knelt at her feet. It was a hard struggle for Perpetua, for she loved her father and her family very much, and still more her own babe. But God was more to her than these. She told her father: "Nothing will happen to me but what God wills; our fate lies in His hands." The poor father went away feeling very sad. On the following day all the accused persons confessed themselves Christians before their judges and were condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts. After her return to prison Perpetua had a vision. She saw herself in the amphitheatre where the Christians were usually thrown to the beasts. A huge crowd of spectators was present. She was attacked, not by animals, but by a pagan of frightful appearance. Suddenly she was transformed into a man and was anointed by angels. Then came a man who was so large that he towered over the whole amphitheatre. He was mag-

nificently attired and bore a green branch, on which were golden apples. He commanded silence and spoke as follows: "If this pagan conquers her, he will kill her with the sword; but if she overcomes him, she will receive this branch." He then went away and Perpetua fought with the pagan. She was victorious and received the branch. From this vision Perpetua saw that she must fight against the wicked enemy if she would be victorious and receive the crown of victory. The anointing by the angels reminded her that she had been strengthened for the fight by the Sacrament of Confirmation. That she was transformed into a man was taken to indicate that through the power of the Holy Ghost women become as strong and courageous as men. A few days later they were taken to the amphitheatre. They were all radiant with joy. Perpetua rejoiced most of all. She entered the great open pit of the theatre singing. These Christians said to the Judge: "You judge us, but God will judge you." For this the judge ordered them to be scourged. Then wild beasts were let loose upon them. Perpetua was placed in a net and thrown in front of a wild ox, which tossed her about and trampled upon her; finally she was killed with a dagger. Many pagans, seeing her heroic courage, believed in Jesus Christ. For over 1700 years Perpetua has worn the crown of victory in Heaven; for she died in the year 202 or 203. Her feast is commemorated on the 6th of March.

Spirit of Counsel! be our guide,
Teach us, by earthly struggles tried,
Our heavenly crown to win.
Spirit of Fortitude! Thy power
Be with us in temptation's hour,
To keep us pure from sin.

Courageous Women

During the Communist régime in Hungary (1919) many women courageously professed the Catholic faith. The following are examples of this:

When the Loreto nuns were about to be driven from Budapest, the women of the town marched to the convent and tried to prevent the red soldiers from entering. A woman of the proletariat had a child of seven years with her. When the soldiers advanced, she lifted up the child and held it in front of her, saying: "You must

kill this child and me before you can kill the nuns, for they have fed and housed me and my child."

When the administrator of confiscated church property, Oscar Faber, visited a girls' school to examine the teaching there, he asked some questions in history. A girl of sixteen stood up and fearlessly recited a passage full of patriotism and faith in God. Faber became pale with rage, and when the girl had finished, said: "Comrade, do you know that I could have you hanged for this? What do you say?" The girl, who was the daughter of a prominent family, answered: "I know it. But I am not afraid of you. If you have me hanged, I shall pray in the next world for your conversion." The hardened, cruel man was affected by these words. Pale and stammering with excitement, he muttered to himself: "I have never met such a strong character among men," and left the school.

An Act of Faith

Firmly I believe and truly
God in three and God in one;
And I next acknowledge truly
Manhood taken by the Son.

And I trust and hope most fully
In that Manhood crucified;
And each thought and deed unruly
Do to death, as He has died.

Simply to His grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong;
And I love supremely, solely,
Him the Holy, Him the Strong.

And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,
Holy Church, as His creation,
And her teachings, as His own.

Adoration aye be given
With and through the angelic host,
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

(Cardinal Newman)

The Triumph of the Just on the Last Day

"Then shall the just stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them, and taken away their labours. These seeing it, shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation. Saying within themselves, repenting, and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they, whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints. Therefore we have erred from the way of truth" (Wisdom V, 1–6).

CHAPTER XXVII

Extreme Unction

1. Our souls are most in need of help and consolation in the time of dangerous illness, when death and eternity are near. Jesus who, during His life upon earth, showed particular charity towards the sick, has instituted a special Sacrament for them,—Extreme Unction. St. James writes: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James V, 14, 15). This must have been decreed by Jesus Himself, otherwise the Apostle could not have promised that the sins of the sick would be forgiven through this rite. Hence Extreme Unction was instituted by Jesus Christ and is a true Sacrament. The Church has administered it as such from the time of the Apostles.

2. The *outward sign* of this Sacrament is the anointment of the sick with holy oil and the accompanying prayer of the priest.

The principal *effect* of Extreme Unction is the forgiveness of sins. Generally speaking, only venial sins are forgiven in this Sacrament. Mortal sins must be effaced by the Sacrament of Penance or at least by perfect contrition before receiving Extreme Unction. Yet if the sick person is unable either to confess his sins or to make an act of perfect contrition, his mortal sins can also be forgiven in Extreme Unction, provided he at least has imperfect contrition.

The sick person furthermore receives consolation and peace

from this Sacrament, enabling him to bear his illness more patiently and to fear death less. He is also strengthened against the temptations of the evil one. "The Lord will raise up the sick," says the Apostle.

Finally, Extreme Unction often restores bodily health, especially when the Sacrament is received with great confidence and in good time, before death is imminent.

3. Extreme Unction was instituted by Jesus Christ for all who are seriously and dangerously ill, not merely for those actually dying. When possible, this Sacrament should be received while fully conscious. If the patient has lost consciousness, the priest should be sent for without delay, for it is possible that Extreme Unction may save his soul from eternal damnation. But often the unconscious patient cannot be helped by this Sacrament because he is guilty of mortal sin, of which he has not repented and of which he is now no longer able to repent. But if he should recover consciousness after Extreme Unction has been administered, he should make an act of perfect contrition and if possible confess his sins.

Children who have attained the use of reason (about seven years) can and ought to receive Extreme Unction when they are dangerously ill.

If the danger of death has passed away, and then returns, Extreme Unction can and ought to be received again, especially if a fairly long period has elapsed since it was first received, say, three months or half a year.

Let us beg of our Divine Saviour to come to our aid in the hour of death by Extreme Unction! If we are dangerously ill, we should ask to receive this precious Sacrament without delay.

The Heavenly Physician

A priest of the Archdiocese of Vienna relates that he was present, apparently by chance, in 1913, when some doctors were holding a consultation over a factory-worker who was seriously ill. They

told the man's wife that his condition was dangerous, in fact, hopeless. Being a Catholic, she wished to call a priest but was told the least excitement might cause instant death. The wife was overcome with grief. The priest wanted to anoint the sick man immediately, but she said: "Father, it is impossible. He would get very much excited if he saw you, for he was not at all pious and took no heed of the Church. I cannot allow a priest to visit him." The priest replied: "My good woman, it is true the doctors think there is scarcely any hope for your husband. But we know that there is a higher Power above all the doctors of the world, the Chief Physician, who is Lord over life and death. It may be that He holds a different opinion. He can help in the worst cases. Had we not better consult this Great Physician?" The woman consented, and the priest went in to the sick man. He counselled him to invoke the Great Physician in Heaven and, contrary to his wife's expectation, and to her great joy, he declared himself ready. After an hour he had been given the Sacraments, and the Heavenly Physician healed his soul and also his body. He recovered his health completely. Two months later the priest received a postal card from Mariazell, telling him that the man was now cured and had gone with his wife to this place of pilgrimage to thank the Heavenly Physician for the favour.

CHAPTER XXVIII

How the Sacraments Are Administered to the Sick

The Church assists those who are dangerously ill by administering to them not only Extreme Unction, but also the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Thus he is prepared for death, should this occur.

1. If the priest is called to attend a sick person, there should be in the room a table covered with a white cloth and beside it, if possible, a pridieu on which the priest can kneel. On the table there should be a crucifix, two burning candles, a glass containing holy water, a small glass with ordinary water, a plate with six little balls of cotton, some salt, and a towel.

The patient should prepare himself by making an examination of conscience and an act of contrition. Complete fasting before Holy Communion is not required from those who are dangerously ill.

2. When the priest enters the room with the Blessed Sacrament, the attendants should kneel down and adore Jesus in the Sacred Host. The priest imparts the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament and then also kneels down. He now sprinkles holy water on the sick person, in order to ask God to give him true contrition. Then the attendants leave the room and the priest hears the sick man's confession. It is advisable for him to tell in this confession, what his relations towards God have been during his whole life. He should mention whether he has ever made an invalid confession without making atonement for it since. If he is unable to speak, he should confess his sins and manifest his contrition by striking his breast or by some other sign.

After the sick person has made his confession, the attendants should return to the room and kneel while the priest administers Holy Communion to the patient as "Viaticum."

If there is danger of death, the priest then administers Extreme Unction; that is, he anoints the patient on the organs of the five senses, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the mouth, the hands and feet with the holy oils which were consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday. While he anoints him he says: "By this holy anointing and of His most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever thou hast committed by thy sight, by thy hearing, by thy smell, by thy taste or by thy speech, by thy touch, by thy steps, or by sensual desires." The priest also recites several prayers for the recovery of the sick person. While receiving Extreme Unction the patient should elicit an act of confidence and resignation to the will of God. The priest indicates this before administering Extreme Unction, by holding the crucifix to the patient's lips to be kissed.

After administering Extreme Unction, the priest imparts to the patient the plenary indulgence for the hour of death. To gain this indulgence the patient must contritely receive his suffering and even death as a penance for his sins and confidently invoke the holy name of Jesus.

3. After the sick person has received the Holy Sacraments worthily, he can confidently go forward to meet death and the Last Judgment. He has been reconciled to God, His loving Saviour is with him, and accompanies him into eternity.

But no one should rely on being able to atone for a sinful life on his death bed. A great many Catholics die suddenly and, as a rule, only those who have led a Christian life are granted the grace worthily to receive the Sacraments at death.

4. Frequently the sick do not realize the danger of their condition and it becomes the duty of their relatives to exhort them to receive the last Sacraments. They should not refrain from

fulfilling this duty through fear of exciting the sick person. For the reception of the Sacraments will rather serve to calm and console the patient. To fear that the patient will have to die if he receives the Sacraments is foolish. For the reception of the Holy Sacraments quite often marks the beginning of recovery. If the relatives do not know how to induce the patient to receive the Sacraments, it may be well to ask the priest to visit him first. The greatest benefit his relatives or friends can bestow upon a person who is dangerously ill is to see to it that he receives the Sacraments. In this way they may perhaps save him from hell.

5. We should also help the sick by reading to them, edifying books, such as the lives of the saints, and by reciting short prayers aloud in their presence. We should, however, not be too insistent in this. Above all, we should help them to make acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition.

Which Sacraments should a Catholic receive when he is dangerously ill?

When he is dangerously ill, a Catholic should receive the Sacraments of Penance, the Holy Eucharist, and Extreme Unction.

Whose duty is it to see to it that the sick receive the last Sacraments?

Generally it is the duty of the relatives or friends of the sick to see to it that they receive the last Sacraments.

How should the sick prepare themselves for the reception of the last Sacraments?

The sick should prepare themselves for the reception of the last Sacraments by examining their conscience and by making acts of contrition, confidence in God, and resignation to His holy will.

Archduke Charles's Preparation for the Last Journey

Archduke Charles of Austria, who in 1809 defeated Napoleon (until then always victorious) at Aspern, while still in good health

used frequently to request his confessor to let him know when death would be near. Often others know this better than the sick man himself. "Just say to me: Come, you old veteran, it is time to march!" In 1847 the Archduke had a sudden attack of pleurisy. He did not require to be warned by his confessor. He himself asked at once for the last Sacraments. He received them with the greatest devotion and went to meet his Master peacefully and confidently.

The Greatest Benefit Bestowed by a Physician

Baron von Sieberer, a great philanthropist, died in Innsbruck in 1914. During his lifetime he had spent nearly all his means—which were considerable—on orphans and the aged poor. Unfortunately he had lost his faith in early youth and could not be moved by the entreaties of his friends to return to God. When, with advancing years, his heart began to grow weaker, a Catholic doctor warned him of his serious condition and of the necessity of being prepared for death. The old man sent for a priest and received the last Sacraments with edifying devotion. On the day of his death he called the nurse to his bedside and requested her to give 200 kronen which he kept in an envelope in his desk to the doctor as a token of his gratitude for having told him that he was in danger of death.

The Happy Death of a Catholic Soldier

During the World War Fr. Raymond Dreiling, O.F.M., was called to the bedside of a Westphalian soldier whose leg had to be amputated. When he had received the Sacraments, the soldier said with a happy smile: "Now I do not mind the operation, for I am not afraid of death." He calmly dictated his last wishes to his father and mother, brothers and sisters, while the priest wrote them in his diary. The operation was successful, but it came too late, as blood poisoning had already set in. The poor man knew he had to die, but all that he said was: "I am content to die. I should not care to live longer if I were given the choice, for I am going to see God in Heaven." When Fr. Dreiling returned to him after an hour, he shook his head and said jocosely: "Death is a queer old fellow. I have gone so far on the road, and still he has not come. He might be a bit quicker. Wonder how long I still have to live?" The Sisters had brought him some flowers and the priest had given him a new

rosary, as he had sent his own to his parents for a souvenir. The dying man had the rosary wound about his folded hands and held the flowers between his fingers. He said: "You must promise me, Father, that you will be present at my funeral tomorrow afternoon." "And will you, Sister, see to it, that the rosary and the flowers are in my hands after death just as they are now?" Tears were in the eyes of both priest and Sister, but the good man only said: "How glad I am that I am going to see our dear Lord! I will pray for our country. for my parents, brothers and sisters, and for you all."

A Sick Call in the Philippines

Fr. Verbrugge, a missionary in the Philippine Islands, writes: "Last Friday I was summoned to take the Holy Viaticum to a dying man. There was no need to ask the way. 'When the bell rings,' I was told, 'go to the church at once and fetch the Blessed Sacrament, and follow the children.' Sure enough, there were some two hundred children waiting for me when the call came. Scarcely had I started on the journey, when they began to say the rosary aloud. As we went through the streets of the village, the doors were flung open, and a crowd of women followed with lighted candles. Soon there were five hundred people following me. The house where the sick man lay was a mile and a half from the village. It was a poor thatched hut, not much better than the stable at Bethlehem; but about fifty yards of the path leading to it were covered with bamboo matting, the hut itself was draped in white, and near the sickbed was a little altar, decorated with flowers, pictures, and statues. According to the custom of that locality, all the neighbours had come to help, and each had contributed his share of the decoration. On the whole it was the simplest and most touching expression of faith in the Blessed Sacrament I ever saw."

A Royal Acolyte

In his "Little Book on the Inner Life" Fr. Rupert Wickl, S.J., relates the following story:

"Queen Maria of Bavaria (d. 1889) had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. She loved to visit the quiet little church in the Bavarian village of Elbingenalp during her stay at her summer residence there. One hot afternoon a school girl came running for the priest, saying that somebody was dying and wanted to receive

the last Sacraments at once. The priest hastened to the church. There was no sacristan there, for all the people were working in the fields. So he placed the lantern and the little bell in the child's hands and took the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle. The Queen, who was praying in a corner, rose from her seat and, taking the lantern and the little bell from the child, went in front of the priest. They had to pass through fields and meadows. The people stared in wonder, then followed, and soon there was a large procession, Queen Maria leading with the lantern and the bell. Thus the Queen of Bavaria acted as an acolyte.

CHAPTER XXIX

Holy Orders

1. Jesus gave to His Apostles great power, especially the power to forgive sins and to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He desired that this power should be retained in the Church and therefore commanded His Apostles to transmit it to others. The Apostles consecrated many bishops and transmitted their full power and authority to them. Others they ordained priests and gave them a large part of their power.[1] Others they made deacons and gave them a lesser part of their power. With the power, they imparted to them the grace to fulfil the duties of their office. Therefore St. Paul writes to Timothy, whom he had consecrated bishop: "I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands" (2 Tim. I, 6). Like the Apostles, their successors, the bishops, ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. This is the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

2. To become a priest it is necessary to have a special vocation from God. St. Paul writes: "Neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was" (Heb. V, 4). Vocation is shown by a strong inclination and suitability for the priesthood and by the call of the bishop. The preparation for Holy Orders is long and laborious. First the candidate must spend years in study and the practice of piety. Then he receives minor orders, by which he is em-

[1] Besides the Apostles, Jesus also sent out seventy-two disciples to preach the Gospel, but He did not give them as much authority as He gave to the Apostles.

powered to perform various offices in the service of God. Some time after this he is ordained subdeacon. The subdeacon assists the officiating priest at solemn High Mass. He is obliged to recite the Divine Office daily and to lead a celibate life. After some time the subdeacon is ordained deacon and empowered to preach and to administer Baptism and Holy Communion. Finally, the deacon is ordained a priest. Ordination to the priesthood is imparted in the following manner: The bishop during Holy Mass after many prayers and exhortations imposes his hands on the deacon, anoints his hands with holy oil, and hands him the chalice with wine and the paten with the host, that he may touch them, saying: "Receive the power to offer to God the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for the living as well as for the dead." Finally, the bishop again imposes his hands on the deacon, saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

The priest is empowered to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to administer the Sacraments. But he cannot ordain other priests and, as a rule, cannot administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

3. Every Catholic belongs to one large pastoral district, called "diocese," and presided over by a bishop. He also belongs to a smaller district within the diocese, which is called parish. The priest who is in charge of the parish is called parish priest; if he has other priests to assist him, these are called curates, chaplains or vicars. Every Catholic is subject to his pastor and must go to him for the Sacraments of Baptism and Matrimony, for the attendance in sickness and a Christian burial. These acts are entered in the parish books or registers, from which certificates may be obtained upon request. A Catholic may assist at Mass on Sundays outside his own parish; he may also receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist outside his parish. But it is advisable to receive the Easter Communion in

one's own parish church, and, as far as possible, to keep to one's own parish as a rule.

4. Priests are bound to devote themselves entirely to furthering the glory of God and the salvation of souls and, if necessary, must lay down their lives for these sacred causes. In order that they may be able to devote themselves entirely to their spiritual duties, the Church requires that they should remain unmarried (celibacy).

The faithful should show respect and gratitude to the priests. Every Catholic is bound to obey the Pope, his bishop, his parish priest or his representative, his confessor or religious instructor in all spiritual matters. Jesus said to the Apostles and their successors: "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me" (Luke X, 16).

Priests are hated, slandered, and persecuted by wicked people. Faults committed by individual priests are put to the account of the whole clergy. Many priests have been unjustly imprisoned and even put to death. Jesus foretold all this when He said to His Apostles: "If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. . . If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John XV, 19–20). But He also said: "Blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for My sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven" (Matth. V, 11, 12).

What power have priests?

Priests have the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to forgive sins, and to administer other Sacraments.

Priestly Heroism

The sacrifices made by priests for the salvation of souls can be very clearly seen in the foreign missions. The missionaries leave

their homes to win souls for Christ in distant parts of the world, often amid the greatest privations and dangers.

Such a missionary was the famous Fr. Damian Deveuster, a Belgian. He worked in the Hawaii or Sandwich Islands in the Pacific Ocean. In those islands there are many lepers. Leprosy is a disease which causes the living body to decay. One limb after another falls from the body. Worms feed on the poor lepers. They give forth an unbearable stench, and their breath infects the air. As leprosy is infectious, the government has the lepers conveyed to the island of Molokai, where they are isolated from the rest of mankind and from whence they may never depart. Fr. Damian heard how abandoned these lepers were and how in their despair they gave themselves up to drunkenness and other vices. A number of them were Catholics. From time to time a Catholic priest came to them. This was not enough, and Fr. Damian offered to go and stay with these poor people. The bishop gladly accepted his offer, and in 1873 Fr. Damian went and took up his abode among the lepers. He was father and mother to them. He nursed them, provided for cleanliness, built churches and dwellings, founded an orphanage, and made coffins for the dead—1500 in the course of years. He said Holy Mass and preached on Sundays, exhorted and comforted the sufferers, instructed the children, administered the Sacraments, and prayed constantly for his protegés. He felt so closely united to his lepers that he used to say in his sermons: "We lepers." In this way he soon effected a complete change on the island. Piety, contentment, and joy entered into the hearts of the poor outcasts, their condition improved to an amazing extent, and the mortality rate decreased considerably.

In 1885 Fr. Damian was himself stricken with leprosy. He had expected it and was perfectly resigned to the will of God. He worked unceasingly as long as he could. In 1889 he died. The brother who nursed him writes: "I have never seen a happier death. He suffered and prayed in continual communion with God and repeatedly assured me that he was very happy because he would be able to celebrate Easter in Heaven." It was a great consolation for Fr. Damian that his work had been taken up by another priest and that three nuns also had set out for Molokai to nurse the lepers. His lepers showed the most touching devotion to him during his illness and after his death his fame spread throughout the world.

The World War also brought forth many glorious examples of sacrifice made by priests.

At the beginning of the War, Dr. Rudolf Hittmair, Bishop of Linz, inspired by heroic charity, went to the hospital of the Brothers of Mercy in that town, to nurse the sick and wounded soldiers. Day and night he cared for them like an ordinary nursing brother, with a tenderness that love alone can inspire. His charity also moved him to minister to the enemy. On February 10th, 1915, he visited the camp of the Serbian prisoners in Mauthausen near Linz. Here he probably contracted the germs of a fever, which developed on February 26th. His body, weakened by the strenuous work in the hospital, quickly succumbed to a treacherous disease. On the 5th of March this noble shepherd breathed his last, a true victim to charity.

One of the finest acts of heroism in the World War was the defence made at Col di Lana on the southeast border of Tyrol. For months the imperial archers suffered the most terrible attacks from the Italian armies. Their pastor, Dr. Anselm Blumenschein, O.S.B., of Kremsmünster Abbey in Upper Austria, had been sent to Col di Lana point at his own urgent request. When, shortly before Easter, 1916, the attacks of the enemy became more furious, Dr. Blumenschein remained day and night at the points that were threatened most, although he would have done his duty by staying at the post from which the relieving guard departed every forty-eight hours. Again and again he passed over the path leading from the Sief peak to the Col di Lana peak, from which he might fall at any moment, right or left, down the precipitous rocks which were almost continually under the fire of the enemy. He was received up there as an angel from Heaven, the people crowding round him like children; strong men who had never been overcome by an enemy, wept for joy. The priest remained with them twenty-four hours or longer, encouraging and comforting them, and giving absolution to those who had to face death at any moment. On the 17th of April the Col di Lana peak stood for hours under such a hot fire that the trenches were levelled and the station reduced to ruins. That evening Dr. Blumenschein asked the commandant of the battalion to allow him to ascend the summit. As all the roads were under continual fire, his request was refused; the commandant wanted to spare the priest's life. As the distress grew greater and the trenches were full of wounded and dying soldiers,

the captain of the company stationed on the Col di Lana peak telephoned for Dr. Blumenschein. Reluctantly the commandant imparted the message to the courageous priest, who eagerly and gladly set out on the perilous journey. Scarcely had he reached the summit, when he was killed by an enemy shell. The Italian soldiers found him lying with arms folded on his breast.

On the 25th of January, 1918, there was a terrible accident on the Ratisbon-Munich railway line, near Schleissheim station, a short distance from Munich. A case of carbon disulphide exploded in a third-class coach of an express train. In a moment the carriage, which was full of passengers, burst into flames. Fr. William Weber, a military chaplain from Landshut, who was sitting near the door, was able to escape. But when he had left the carriage, he heard cries for help from within, where men and women were struggling against death. He gave no more thought to his own life, but entered the carriage repeatedly to help in rescuing the passengers and to give absolution to the dying. He was himself badly wounded when he heard a cry for help from a soldier who had become fastened to the coach by his luggage and could not extricate himself. Enveloped in flames, the poor man cried out: "Help, for God's sake! I have seven children!" Father Weber once more entered the coach, which was filled with flames and poison gas. He saved the man's life, but was burned terribly on the hands and face and inhaled so much poison gas that he died after seven days of agony in a clinic at Munich. To his venerable old mother, who was with him when he died, he said, "I am ready."

CHAPTER XXX

Marriage and How It Should Be Solemnized

1. God instituted the Sacrament of Matrimony in Paradise when he joined Adam and Eve together in an inseparable union, with the command: "Increase and multiply" (Gen. I, 28). In course of time marriage degenerated. But Jesus restored it to its pristine sanctity. He said: **"What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder"** (Matth. XIX, 6). **"Everyone that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery"** (Luke XVI, 18).

The indissolubility of marriage is clearly expressed in these words; the bond of marriage, once made, continues until either the husband or the wife dies. These words also express the unity of marriage, that is to say, that a man can only have one wife and the wife only one husband. Jesus made marriage insoluble in order to secure the happiness of the married and their children; because a husband and wife can only have the right love for each other when they take each other for life. According to the will of Christ, marriage should be a symbol of His tender, indissoluble union with the Church (Eph. V, 22–33). Moreover, the upbringing and the happiness of the children can only be secured by the parents living together during their whole lifetime. It is similar with regard to the unity of marriage. The Catholic Church can not and will not deviate from these commandments of Christ.

It is true there are exceptional cases in which urgent reasons

require that a husband and wife should separate and live apart from each other. The Church permits this; but the marriage bond remains and neither party may marry again during the lifetime of the other. Jesus Christ expressly says: "Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." Therefore St. Paul writes: "To them that are married, not I but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband [that is, of her own free will, without the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities]; and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife" (1 Cor. VII, 10–11).

2. The married assume serious duties: mutual love, care and fidelity until death, providing for and upbringing of the children. God desires to give parents a special grace for the fulfilment of these duties, and for this reason Jesus has raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament. When Christians contract marriage, they receive a Sacrament and have a claim on God's special help. The Church has received this doctrine from the Apostles.

Jesus gave all the Sacraments to the Church, and hence also the Sacrament of Matrimony. Therefore it is for the Church to decide under what conditions a marriage is valid, and how it should be contracted. The material side of marriage (for example, the property of both parties) is subject to regulation by the State.

3. A promise of marriage or engagement, if it is to be acknowledged by the Church, must be set down in writing and signed by both parties and the parish priest, or two witnesses. Engagements should be entered into only at a mature age and if there is a certain prospect of early marriage. Those who intend to marry should first consider before God, whether they are called to the married state and whom they should choose as

their partner in life. In this they should not be guided by their passions, but should keep before their minds the high aim of marriage, that is, to bring souls into the Church and to Heaven. They should look to the salvation of their own souls, pray fervently for light and grace, and ask the advice of parents or guardians. The time of engagement should be spent in a decorous and Christian manner. Those who are engaged should avoid being alone together and should permit no sinful familiarities. A sinful engagement is often followed by an unhappy marriage.

4. Some time before the marriage the engaged pair should announce their intention to their parish priest, bringing with them the necessary documents—baptismal certificate, information regarding their habitat, and, in cases of a previous marriage, the marriage certificate and the death certificate of the deceased partner. It would be a grievous sin of disloyalty towards the Church if a Catholic applied to a non-Catholic minister to be married. The parish priest sees whether there is any canonical obstacle to the proposed marriage and gives the bridal pair instructions about the duties of the married state. The banns are read three times at a public service in church in order to discover any obstacles that may exist. Before the marriage ceremony the engaged couple should receive the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist in order that they may be united to Jesus and receive His blessing in their new state. They should also be confirmed.

The marriage must take place in the presence of the parish priest or his representative, and of two witnesses. The couple declare, before the priest, that they take each other in marriage and that they mean to remain faithful to each other until they are parted in death. As soon as they have made this declaration, the marriage is contracted. Then they clasp each other's right hand and exchange rings in token of their vow to remain faithful to each other. The priest places his stole around their

joined hands and blesses the bond with the Sign of the Cross

If Catholics are married before a civil magistrate, instead o by the parish priest, the marriage is not valid in the eyes of Goo and the Church and they sin grievously if they live together a man and wife.

Christian marriage is the foundation of happiness and orde in family and state. If the marriage laws prescribed by th Catholic Church were disregarded, chaos and misery would b the result.

Can a valid marriage be dissolved?

A valid marriage can be dissolved only by death.

Marriage and Family Life among Pagans

The benefit conferred on mankind by Jesus Christ through His regulation of marriage can best be seen by taking a glance a the marriage and family relationships that exist among pagan na tions.

These relationships are satisfactory only among a few smal pagan tribes, which have preserved their primitive customs. Thes are the so-called Pygmy (dwarf) peoples of Central Africa, th natives of the Andaman Islands between Near and Farther India several South Australian races, and a few others, who still pos sess their original faith in one God and, morally speaking, stan highest among pagan peoples. They have preserved monogamou marriage, which is dissolved only by death, while the great majorit of heathen nations, in spite of their progress in civilization an economic matters, have greatly degenerated in religion and mor ality. The women especially have sunk to the level of slaves.

Among pagan peoples (with the exception of the above men tioned primitive races) men regard it as their right to have severa wives. For the most part only the wealthy and powerful can affor this; but in Africa polygamy is wide-spread even among the com mon people. Among almost all pagan nations the husband can pu away his wife whenever he chooses to do so. In many cases, if h wants to get rid of her, he sells her as though she were a head o cattle. Among savage nations it often happens that the husban kills his wife with impunity if she displeases him.

Missionaries from Uganda in Central Africa relate that one da

the Katikiro (king's minister) ordered that one of his wives should have her ears and lips cut off and then be driven away because she had gone without permission to visit her father, who lived a mile away. Fr. Lourbel witnessed a still more frightful incident. He was waiting with a crowd of Baganda (inhabitants of Uganda) in the ante-chamber of the King's residence for the royal reception to begin. Suddenly the doors of the adjoining room flew open, and one of the wives of Mtesa, the King, was dragged out by the feet. The tyrant had condemned her to have her ears, lips, nose, and finally her head, cut off because she had spoken in too loud a voice before the reception began. The sentence was carried out without the missionary being able to prevent it.

A happy family life is impossible where such relations exist between husband and wife. As the wife is despised and enslaved, so it is also with the daughters. The sons grow accustomed to the brutal ways of their fathers, and even before they are of age lord it over their mothers and sisters.

The following are a few instances showing the marriage relations among the more cultured pagans, especially in China, Japan, and India. In China the marriage is arranged by the parents of the bride and the groom. Often the latter have never seen each other until they meet for the marriage ceremony. In many localities the girl is sold to the bridegroom's parents. If the husband does not like his wife, he may sell her to somebody else.

A traveller relates the following about the Japanese, apparently without having any idea of the atrocity implied by the story: "Marriages between Europeans and Japanese girls are in most cases only temporary. Two or three visits to a family are considered sufficient before an offer of marriage is made for one or other of the daughters. The proposal is announced by a mediator either to the grandmother or to the oldest female member of the family. This is followed by a family council, at which the matter is considered, the decision being conveyed to the young man by the mediator. Usually the condition imposed by the father is the payment of 100 to 300 dollars on the day the contract is made, while the mother demands the payment of a monthly sum of 20 dollars for the young wife. Without further ceremony the girl goes to her new home and holds her position as wife there as long as it pleases her master. After the separation, which often occurs a few months later, the Japanese girl returns to the house of her parents without

having suffered the least damage to her reputation. Usually she has saved a few hundred dollars, which remain her property, until one day a Japanese youth presents himself and makes a more serious proposal to the grandmother for the hand of her granddaughter." [1]

In India a girl is "married" at the age of three to six, usually to a much older boy. After the wedding she remains in the house of her parents until she has reached the requisite age and is demanded by the father of the bridegroom. The girl is bound, but the bridegroom (or rather his father) can dissolve the "marriage." Further, after the young wife has entered the house of her husband, she may be sent home at any time for any or no reason. Among the higher castes a terrible custom once prevailed according to which, on the death of the husband, his widow was burned with the body of the husband. This custom has been abandoned under British rule. But the law is still enforced by which the widow may not marry again, even when she is extremely young. She is deprived of the adornment of her hair and must wear mourning until her death; thus she leads a joyless life full of misery and moral danger.

The Christian religion alone has upheld the sanctity of marriage and thus ensured happiness to the family. Christianity alone has given to woman her full dignity by declaring her to be the equal of her husband as a human being and a temple of God and by granting her the same rights as her husband—apart from the obedience due to the husband as head of the house. The Christian religion gives the commandment: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered himself up to it" (Eph. V, 25). But when the Christian religion is given up, the dignity of womanhood sinks back into the mire. The woman becomes degraded to the level of a tool for her husband's self-indulgence.

How England Came to Be Separated from the Catholic Church

The fidelity with which the Catholic Church upholds the indissolubility of marriage as it was instituted by Jesus Christ is shown by the following instance: King Henry VIII of England (1509-1547) was married to Catherine of Aragon. After he had lived with her seventeen years, he wished to marry her maid of

[1] G. Kreitner, *Im fernen Osten,* Vienna, 1881, p. 235.

honour, Anne Boleyn. Therefore he asked the Pope to declare his marriage with Catherine invalid. The Pope could not do this because the marriage had been contracted with perfect validity. The King threatened to break away with his whole country from the Church. But the Pope remained faithful to his duty. As a result the King did break away from the Holy See and declared himself to be the head of the Church in England. His subjects had to take an oath acknowledging him to be head of the Church. Many Catholics who refused to take this oath were cruelly put to death, hanged or quartered; among these were six hundred priests and bishops. Thus originated the so-called Anglican (that is, English) Church.

The King took Anne Boleyn as his wife, but had her executed later on, and took a third wife. After the latter's death he took a fourth, whom he divorced. He then took a fifth, whom afterwards he had executed. Finally he took a sixth wife. Thus, even in those days it was manifest that marriage no longer possessed security when the commandments of Jesus Christ and of the Church were so flagrantly disregarded by the rulers of nations.

CHAPTER XXXI

Forbidden Marriages—Marriage Impediments—Mixed Marriages

1. The Church has made certain laws governing marriage. For example, she has decreed that any person who has taken the vow of chastity may not marry, and that Catholics may not marry non-Catholics. Any person who contracts such a marriage commits a sin.

The Church has also established certain marriage impediments; when these are present, no valid marriage can take place. Thus no valid marriage can take place between blood relatives to the third degree (as far as the grandchildren of brothers and sisters) nor between those related by marriage to the second degree (the children of sisters and brothers). The husband is related by marriage to the relatives of his wife, and the wife to the relatives of her husband. Further, any person who has baptised someone in case of necessity, may not marry the latter; nor may a godparent marry his godchild. Priests and religious who have taken the vow af chastity may not marry. Christians may not marry non-Christians.

The Church has set up these impediments to marriage solely with a view to ensure the happiness of her children and, in general, the salvation of souls. But when there are important reasons for deviating from some of her regulations in certain cases, she grants a "dispensation." [1]

[1] No one can dispense from the impediment to marriage that lies in the unity and indissolubility of a marraige already contracted, because this impediment was established by Jesus Christ Himself.

2. Of special importance is the law which forbids marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, or so-called *mixed marriages*. The Church forbids such marriages because, as a rule, they expose the souls of the Catholic party and of the children to great danger. Catholics married to non-Catholics generally become estranged from the Church and often fall away entirely. Sometimes they must agree to allow their children to be brought up in a false religion. Unfortunately they often consent to have at least some of their children brought up in a different religion. The promise made by the non-Catholic parent is but too frequently disregarded.

As a rule that unity which is a fundamental condition of happiness does not exist in mixed marriages. Husband and wife are at variance in the most important matter of religion. Usually they are also at variance in their conception of marriage, since the Catholic party regards marriage as indissoluble, whereas the Protestant party holds that divorce is permissible.

The Church permits mixed marriages in certain cases, but very unwillingly, and only to prevent greater evils. But in no case does she permit the marriage ceremony to be performed by a clergyman of a different church, because that would imply contempt of the Catholic faith. Any person who is guilty of such contempt is excommunicated, that is to say, so long as he has not done penance, he may not receive the Sacraments and has no share in the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or in the prayers of the Church, nor any claim to a Christian burial. He is, however, still bound by the commandments of the Church.

Since a mixed marriage involves such grave dangers, Catholics should avoid making an acquaintance that might lead to such a union. They should also avoid persons who profess no religion or those who belong to Masonic or similar forbidden societies. Whenever there is question of entering on marriage or an acquaintanceship that may lead to marriage, we must more than ever keep before our minds the words of the Saviour:

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Matth. XVI, 26).

What is a mixed marriage?

A mixed marriage is a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic.

Why does the Catholic Church forbid mixed marriages?

The Catholic Church forbids mixed marriages because they endanger the salvation of the Catholic party and of the children.

Courageous Obedience to the Church's Command

In Osaka (Japan) there lived a Christian family who possessed more treasures in Heaven than in this world. The father, Andrew Trakeda, was employed as joiner on a small merchantship. He hardly earned enough to enable him to procure the necessary clothes and the daily portion of rice for his children. The eldest daughter, a girl of twenty years, was a model Christian. A pagan master mechanic of the marine desired to marry her, notwithstanding her poverty. This marriage would have brought distinction and material advantages to the poor family. But the Christian father, to whom religion meant more than material prosperity, demanded that the suitor fulfil the conditions which the Church demands for a mixed marriage. The pagan, who appeared to be an honest man, promised to allow all the children to be baptized and brought up Christians and never to hinder his wife or children in the practice of the Catholic religion. The wedding was arranged and the betrothal was celebrated according to the custom of the country. As a pledge of his compact the bridegroom had offered the father the usual gifts and these had been accepted.

While they were awaiting a favourable day for the wedding, the suitor allowed himself to be persuaded by pagan relatives and friends to retract his promise. As the betrothal was sealed by the gifts, he hoped to be able to force poor Andrew to give his consent nevertheless. But the latter declared: "If the children are not to be baptized and brought up Catholics, I will never allow my daughter to become your wife." This drew down a storm of rage on the poor man and his daughter. But neither the taunts nor the ridicule of the pagan's relatives, nor his own threats, were

able to move the Christian father to sell his soul and that of his child. His daughter returned the gifts and broke off the engagement.

Contempt on the part of his own relatives, hatred and persecution on the part of the pagan suitor were the results of this courageous act. The family fell into dire straits. But when their distress was greatest, God's help was nearest. A wealthy Christian doctor, whose attention was attracted by the attack made on the brave Christian and his daughter, asked the girl to marry him, and soon they were a happy pair.

CHAPTER XXXII

Ecclesiastical Blessings

1. When Jesus was on earth, He used to bless persons and things. He blessed children, that is, he expressed the wish that all should go well with them. He blessed bread and fishes, that is, he desired they might benefit those who ate them. Before His Ascension into Heaven He lifted up His hands and blessed His Apostles and disciples.

After the example given by their Master, bishops and priests also bless persons and objects in the name of the Church. At the conclusion of Holy Mass the priest blesses the faithful, that is, he asks God to give them His grace and prosper them in body and soul. When a mother enters the house of God for the first time after child-birth she receives a special blessing for herself and her child. The priest asks God to grant both mother and child good health and to lead them to eternal salvation. There is a special blessing also for the sick. The priest can bless food that it may benefit the faithful. He blesses houses that God may protect them and those who dwell in them. Schools and other institutions are especially blessed.

At every blessing the priest makes the Sign of the Cross, because it was on the Cross that Jesus Christ merited all graces and blessings for us. In church and at processions the blessing is sometimes given with the Blessed Sacrament, the priest turning towards the people and forming the Sign of the Cross over them with the monstrance or ciborium.

The priest blesses in the name of the Church. This gives a special power to his blessing. But others also can and should

bless. Thus parents can and should bless their children, for example, at night or when the latter are leaving home. Holy Scripture says: "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children" (Ecclus. III, 11), that is, it prospers their undertakings and efforts.

Each one can also bless himself with the Sign of the Cross and thereby receive many blessings from God, such as protection against the temptations of the devil. The Sign of the Cross should be made especially in the morning and evening, before and after prayer or work, in danger and temptation.

2. Certain blessings are given to objects which are destined to be used in the service of God or for some other pious purpose. Such a blessing is sometimes called a "consecration."

When a church is consecrated, God is asked to take possession of the building, to dwell therein, and to hear the petitions offered up to Him here. Cemeteries, or at least the individual graves, are blessed. On the feast of Candlemas candles are blessed; on Ash Wednesday, ashes; on Palm Sunday, palm branches. At these blessings the priest begs God to inspire with holy thoughts those who receive on their foreheads the holy ashes and those who use the blessed candles or the blessed palm, and also to bless the dwellings in which such candles are lighted or palms kept. The priest blesses water and prays God to protect those who sprinkle themselves or their dwellings with it from the snares of the devil and to give them peace and salvation. Crucifixes, rosaries, religious pictures, and medals are blessed for a similar purpose.

Blessed objects should be treated reverently. We should have confidence that God will be merciful to us because of the prayer of the Church, if we use these objects devoutly. But we must not expect an unfailing effect from the use of such objects and employ them for no other purpose than that for which they are blessed. Blessed objects may not be sold.

Pious Christians sprinkle themselves with holy water every

morning and evening, on entering and leaving a church, and so forth. Usually the Sign of the Holy Cross is made at the same time. Persons or objects that are blessed are usually sprinkled with holy water at the conclusion of the blessing.

Jesus by His Passion and death merited infinite blessings for us, and confided these blessings to His Church. The Church imparts them to the faithful. Let us reap the fruits when we can.

The Blessing of St. Blase

St. Blase lived at the time of the Great Persecutions (d. 320). He was a bishop in Cappadocia and was cast into prison by the governor. As he was a holy man, the sick came to him in prison to be cured. Many were actually cured by his prayers. Among them was a boy who had a fish-bone in his throat and was almost choked. His mother brought two candles as an offering. St. Blase held the two candles in the form of a cross to the boy's neck and he was immediately relieved. To the present day, on the feast of St. Blase, February 2nd, the priest holds two blessed candles, tied together in the form of a cross, to the necks of the faithful and asks God, through the intercession of St. Blase, to protect the faithful from diseases of the throat and other evils.

The Medal of the Immaculate Conception

In 1830 the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared twice to an humble Sister of Mercy in Paris. Our Lady was standing on a sphere (the earth), her feet crushing the serpent, and from her hands came bright rays (symbol of graces), which she sent upon the earth. The whole apparition was enframed by the words: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" The Blessed Virgin commanded the Sister to have medals made similar to the apparition and promised great graces to those who would wear such a medal when blessed. It was only after two years that the Sister's spiritual superior decided to have the medals made, having first obtained the permission of the archbishop of Paris. A great many of the faithful asked for and obtained these medals. Many striking instances of heavenly favour showed that the apparition had been genuine. To the present day there are many instances of obstinate sinners being converted suddenly after they had consented to wear the "Miraculous Medal"; there have

even been cases in which sinners were converted after pious friends had secretly brought the medal near them. The most famous among these conversions was that of Alphonse Ratisbonne, the son of a wealthy Jewish banker in Strasbourg. He was first a lawyer and afterwards entered the banking business of his uncle. He was engaged to be married and wanted to make another journey to the Orient before his marriage. Contrary to his original intention, he also visited Rome. Seeing so many Catholic sanctuaries in that city only increased his prejudice and hatred against the Catholic religion. During a visit he made to Baron de Bussières, a pious Catholic, the conversation turned on the subject of religion. Ratisbonne said he was born a Jew and would die a Jew. The Baron made the following proposal: "Since you are so strong-minded and so sure of yourself, promise me you will wear what I give you." "What is it?" Ratisbonne asked. "This medal, nothing more." It was the "Miraculous Medal" of the Immaculate Conception. Ratisbonne laughed, but promised to wear it, agreeing even to say every day the prayer of St. Bernard: "Remember, O Most Gracious Virgin Mary," etc. He looked upon this as an interesting event which he could relate afterwards for the amusement of his friends. Meanwhile the Baron, his family, and a friend of theirs, Count Laferronays, prayed fervently for his conversion. Not long after, January 20th, 1842, Ratisbonne went with de Bussières to the Church of St. Andrew. Count Laferronays had died suddenly, and Bussières had to make arrangements for the funeral. Meantime Ratisbonne waited in the church. Suddenly he saw the whole church vanish and in its place appeared a chapel filled with light. In the midst of this brightness the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared above the altar, large, radiant, full of sweetness and majesty, in the same form as she was depicted on the medal he wore. Ratisbonne was drawn to her by an irresistible power. She made a sign for him to kneel down. He did so and in a flash all the truths of the Catholic religion were revealed to him. When Baron de Bussières returned, he found the young Israelite on his knees, bathed in tears, scarcely able to utter a word, but kissing the medal he wore round his neck. Soon afterwards Alphonse was baptized. He renounced everything that had been dear to him hitherto, including his fiancée, became a priest, settled in Jerusalem, and devoted himself entirely to the conversion of his former coreligionists. For this purpose he built a large monastery with an orphanage and a school. He died in the Holy Land in 1884.

PART IV

HOW WE SHOULD PRAY

CHAPTER I

Why We Should Pray—The Right Way to Pray

On the road to Heaven we have constant need of grace. After the Sacraments, the most efficacious means of obtaining grace is prayer. The third part of this work was devoted to the Sacraments. We showed there that prayer is necessary when we receive the Sacraments. We will now consider the subject of prayer somewhat more in detail.

1. To pray means to raise mind and heart to God, to praise Him, thank Him, or petition Him for some favour.

Prayer is a duty. For God is our Lord and Creator. In His First Commandment he bids us recognize Him as such. This we can do especially by prayer. In Holy Scripture there is nothing that God asks so often of men as that they should pray. Jesus tells us: **"We ought always to pray, and not to faint"** (Luke XVIII, 1). Constant prayer draws us more closely to God and, united to Him, we find a consolation and peace which the world cannot give.

2. The prayer of petition is the most necessary. For we cannot serve God or save our souls without actual grace, which God usually gives only to those who ask for it. Jesus says: "Your Father in heaven will give the good spirit to them that ask him" (Luke XI, 13). Therefore he who prays often and fervently will receive much grace from God, enabling him to do His will faithfully, to be sorry for his sins, to persevere in doing good till the end, and so to be saved. But from those who will not pray God withdraws His graces, and they fall into sin, sinking deeper and deeper, until finally they are lost. St. Al-

phonsus, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, says: "All the blessed in Heaven have been saved by prayer; all the damned have been lost because they did not pray." Therefore, as long as we live, let us never cease to pray.

Through prayer of petition we also receive help from God in our temporal needs, in so far as it is conducive to the salvation of our soul. For God says: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psalm XLIX, 15).

3. If our prayer is to please God and to be heard by Him, we must pray in the right way.

Above all we should pray *devoutly.* "God is a spirit, and they that adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth" (John IV, 24). A mere prayer of the lips is abhorred by God. Therefore, before we pray, we should be recollected, that is, we should turn our mind away from the things of the world and direct it towards God. "Before prayer prepare thy soul; and be not as a man that tempted God" (Ecclus. XVII, 25). If we notice that we are distracted, we should make repeated efforts to think of God.

To pray it is not necessary to utter words. We can also pray inwardly. But it is useful when praying to express with the lips what the mind thinks and the heart feels; for in this way our attention and devotion are increased and we can also inspire others with devotion.

Anything that hinders true devotion should be avoided during prayer, for example, looking about, laughing, or a careless posture.

Further, we should pray *humbly,* remembering how great and glorious is He to whom we are speaking, and how frail and wretched we are. "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds" (Ecclus. XXXV, 21).

Jesus has promised: "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For

everyone that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Matth. VII, 7–8). Therefore we should pray *with confidence.* "He that wavereth . . . let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James I, 7).

Our confidence should be based on the merits of Jesus Christ. We should pray with confidence in these merits, and at the same time according to the mind of Christ, that is, above all for the Kingdom of God.[1] Then we pray in "the name of Jesus." For such a prayer Jesus has promised: **"Amen, amen I say to you, if you ask the father anything in my name, he will give it you"** (John XVI, 23).

God does not always answer our prayers in the way we expect; for often we ourselves do not know what is really best for us. Often God gives us something far better than that for which we have asked Him. Particularly when we have asked for some temporal favour, He gives us instead a far more valuable spiritual blessing. Nor does He always hear our prayers immediately; for He is not our servant, but our Master. When we pray, we must leave it entirely to Him, when and how He will hear us, and be absolutely resigned to His holy will. Our Divine Saviour Himself when He was terrified at the thought of His suffering on Mount Olivet, prayed: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Thus only do we pray with resignation to the will of God.

We should not cease to pray because God does not hear our petition immediately; rather, we should persevere in prayer. Jesus says that as no one can withstand the persistent entreaties of a friend, so God cannot resist our persistent prayers.

Therefore, let us pray at all times and in the right way. Thus, by relying on God, we shall receive all that is necessary for our true happiness and eternal salvation.

[1] "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matth. VI, 33).

What does it mean to pray?

To pray means to raise the mind and heart to God.

Can we be saved without prayer?

Without prayer we cannot be saved, (1) because God commands us to pray; (2) because it is only by prayer that we receive the grace necessary to serve God faithfully.

How should we pray?

We should pray devoutly and humbly.

How should our petitions be made in order that they may be heard by God?

Our petitions should be made with confidence, with resignation to God's will, and with perseverance.

How Jesus and the Saints Prayed

Jesus has given us the most beautiful example of how to pray. He himself was God and as such was adored by His followers. But He was also man, and as man He prayed unceasingly from His childhood to His death. His thoughts were always with His Heavenly Father, and in all that He said or did, He looked up to God in spirit.

In the Gospel there is frequent mention of the fact that Jesus prayed. At the age of twelve, He made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the festival of Easter. He was not satisfied to spend the eight days during which the festival lasted, almost entirely in the Temple, but remained three days longer, after his parents had departed. Before He entered upon His public life, He prayed for forty full days in the solitude of the desert, without food. Before He chose His Apostles, He spent the whole night in prayer. He prayed before He made Peter the head of His Church. He went with His Apostles to Mount Thabor to pray, and while He prayed there, was transfigured. Twice He miraculously fed thousands of people in the desert. On both occasions He first offered a prayer of thanksgiving. At the Last Supper, before He instituted the Holy Eucharist, He lifted up His eyes to His Heavenly Father and thanked Him. Before leaving the supper-room to go to His death, He said a glorious prayer, which St. John has preserved for us.

Then, before He separated from His Apostles, He offered with them a prayer of praise. When He was overcome by the fear of death on Mount Olivet, He prayed more and more persistently: "Father! if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me! Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." While He hung on the Cross, He prayed, as St. Paul tells us, "with a strong cry and tears" (Heb. V, 7). Finally, He cried with a loud voice: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" bowed his head and died.

Thus the whole life of Christ was one continual prayer. But this did not hinder Him from accomplishing more work than was ever accomplished by any other person.

All the saints whom the Church recommends to our veneration imitated the example of Jesus. Prayer was as necessary for their souls as breathing is for the body. Most of them were accustomed to pray for hours every day. Even though they were overwhelmed with work, they always found time for frequent prayer. Nor did their work suffer; on the contrary, it was done all the more conscientiously, joyfully, and unselfishly. The saints spent in prayer the happiest hours they ever experienced, veritable hours of heavenly happiness. From prayer they drew strength to overcome dangers and difficulties, and not only to gain Heaven for themselves, but to lead an endless number of others to God.

CHAPTER II

When We Should Pray and What Prayers We Should Say on Different Occasions

1. The words of Jesus, "You must always pray, and not faint," mean that we should pray at least every day. The most suitable time for prayer is morning and evening. In the morning we should thank God for having allowed us to begin a new day, tell Him that we will serve Him the whole day, and ask for His help. In the evening we should thank Him for the benefits we have received during the day, examine our conscience, make an act of contrition for our sins, and ask God to protect us during the night. At the principal meals, before and after, we should thank Him for His gifts.

We shall fulfil yet more faithfully the exhortation of Jesus to "pray always, and not faint," if we keep God before us the whole day, and offer to Him all that we do, in obedience to Him, for the love of Him, for His glory, and if we often send up short prayers, so-called *ejaculations*. It is recommended to pray at the beginning and at the end of our work, to say, for example, "In God's name!" "Thanks be to God!" We should also pray when we find ourselves in want or trouble. God tells us: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. XLIX, 15). And through His Apostle St. James He exhorts us: "Is any of you sad? Let him pray" (James V, 13).

Prayer is necessary most of all when we are severely tempted, that is, when we feel strongly incited to commit a mortal sin. For our will is weakened and disposed to evil by original sin,

and without special help from God we cannot resist continually. Jesus says: "Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matth. XXVI, 41).

2. On all these occasions everyone should pray, using his own words. But since we are not always able to do this, we should memorize definite forms of prayer, especially for morning and evening, for meal-times, and in time of temptation. The "Our Father" is suitable for all occasions.

3. Frequent *mental prayer* is also to be recommended, especially in the morning, at Holy Mass, and when we go to Communion. The most excellent form of mental prayer is meditation. For this we should first ask the Holy Ghost to enlighten us. Then we should meditate on the words of some prayer, such as the "Our Father," the Creed, or on some truth of our religion, for example, one of the attributes of God, or a mystery of the Rosary, or some circumstance in the life of our Lord, or one of the last things. With this meditation we could combine some pious petition, such as love for God or contrition for the sins we have committed, and make a good resolution, such as to make this or that sacrifice to God, to perform conscientiously the duties of our state in life, to bear patiently some sorrow, to keep ourselves constantly prepared for death. Finally, we should ask God for grace to carry out our good resolutions. Meditation has a wonderful power of filling our hearts with joy in God and heavenly things, and with zeal for doing good and making us strong in the pursuit of righteousness. Meditation and all forms of mental prayer help us to recite our oral prayers with fervour and joy.

The Apostle of Vienna

Like all saints, St. Clement Mary Hofbauer, C.SS.R., was a man of prayer. He was born in 1751 in the village of Tasswitz, near Znaim in Moravia, as the son of a butcher. When he was seventeen years old, he lost his father. His mother took him to where a

crucifix was hanging on the wall, and said to him: "He is your father now." She implanted a special love of prayer in her boy's heart. Once, when he was eight years old, he was with his mother and met some relatives. The latter, on being asked what they were doing, replied: "Oh, we are only killing time!" When they had gone away, the boy asked what "killing time" meant? His mother told him, whereupon he said: "If they have nothing to do, they should pray."

His desire was to be a priest, but the family could not afford to let him study, and so he became apprenticed to a baker. He used to pray every day, and sometimes whole nights, that God would allow him to become a priest. When he was twenty, he went as a servant into a monastery at Bruck. While there, he had an opportunity of attending the monastery school. In 1776 he had passed through that school, but had not the means to continue his studies. He then built a little hermitage for himself, close to Mühlfrauen, a place of pilgrimage. Here he was able to satisfy his longing to live entirely for God. But the government would not allow any hermit in the country, and so he went to Vienna as a baker's assistant. While here he used to serve at Mass in the Cathedral of St. Stephen. His master wanted him to marry his daughter, but Hofbauer still clung to the idea of becoming a priest and left his master's house to study again. Three sisters of a noble family placed the necessary means at his disposal; they knew him only as "the pious server in St. Stephen's." But he was not destined to study theology in Vienna. For the government —which interfered unduly in spiritual matters—had appointed unbelieving and immoral men as professors of the young students for the priesthood. Hofbauer went on foot to Rome with his friend Hubl. In Rome they felt attracted by the piety of the priests of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists), and entered their society. In 1785 they were both ordained priests.

They were now called to Warsaw, where there were no priests for the German inhabitants. Here they showed great zeal. Inspired by their piety quite a number of young men joined their Congregation. Under the direction of Father Hofbauer, sermons were preached in German, Polish, and French, and confessions were heard almost the whole day long. The church was almost always full. It was a continual mission. Father Hofbauer interested himself particularly in the young. He founded schools, orphanages and societies for them. As he was poor himself, he had to beg for his

orphans. Once the greatest want was felt in his charitable institutions. Fr. Hofbauer went into the church and prayed most fervently. He then went up the steps of the altar, knocked at the tabernacle door, and cried: "Lord, help us, it is high time!" Almost at the same instant an unknown gentleman appeared at the door of the convent with a considerable sum of money. Through the zealous activity of Father Hofbauer and his brothers in religion, Warsaw was soon transformed. Faith, piety, and Christian morality flourished. Fr. Hofbauer founded little branch houses of the Redemptorist Order in other towns, and the same zeal was shown everywhere. But the enemies of the Catholic religion raged against him. At that time Warsaw was under the rule of the King of Saxony, who was altogether in the power of Napoleon. Now Fr. Hofbauer was suspected by Napoleon of being an enemy of the French, and by order of Napoleon the King had to expel the Redemptorists in 1808. With tears in his eyes he signed the warrant for their expulsion. The Redemptorists were taken to the fortress at Küstrin and from there were obliged to go in different directions. This destruction of their work was an exceedingly painful trial for these zealous religious, and most of all for their leader, Fr. Hofbauer.

Fr. Hofbauer now went to Vienna. Here he became the confessor of the Ursuline Sisters and director of their church in the Inner City. The fame of his piety soon spread and the faithful came in large numbers to hear him preach and to go to confession to him.

He prayed and worked without ceasing; almost every day he got up at three o'clock, and later soon after two. Immediately on rising he sang a hymn. After he had dressed, he said his prayers and made his meditation. Then he went to the church, where a large number of people came every day for confession. On two days in the week he heard confessions also in the suburbs. In the church of the Mechitarists confessions lasted mostly till 9.30, but often until 11.30 o'clock. Then he said Mass. Anyone observing him at Mass became inflamed with ardour. After Holy Mass he spent a long time in thanksgiving.

He took no breakfast. Only in old age he used to drink some milk by order of the doctor. His midday meal he took standing. Usually he had some young guests to dinner, some of them poor, whom he served at table. In the afternoon he again visited the Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament. He would often spend hours before the altar

in silent contemplation. In the afternoon he again heard confessions. Then he made pastoral visits, especially to the sick. He was summoned to the sick in all parts of Vienna, especially to such persons as could not be induced to receive the Sacraments. Fr. Hofbauer went wherever he was asked to go. On the way he used to say the rosary for the sick. Once he said: "It is a favourable omen when the sick live in the suburbs. For then I have time to say the whole rosary, and I know of no case in which a sinner was not converted when I had found time to recite this prayer for him." In the evenings he used to gather together a large number of cultured young men. Through their intercourse with him these men became strong in the faith and later exercised a wide-spread influence for good among all, especially the higher ranks of society. The Saint also had intercourse with poets, scholars, and statesmen, and encouraged them to profess and practice the faith in their sphere of activity. A week seldom passed in which Protestants were not converted to the Catholic faith or Jews baptized through his mediation. Thus this humble priest exerted an enormous influence in Vienna, nay, throughout Austria, with the result that faith and religion flourished again after a long period of indifference.

But the enemies of the Church did not rest. The government suspected Fr. Hofbauer because he was a member of a foreign religious order and he received orders to leave Austria. When the Archbishop of Vienna, Count Hohenwart, heard this, he went to the Emperor and petitioned him on behalf of Fr. Hofbauer, saying: "If Fr. Hofbauer goes away, I shall lose my best priest!" The Emperor decided that the matter should be postponed for the present. Soon after, the Emperor went to Rome to visit Pope Pius VII. During the audience the Pope congratulated him on having in Vienna Fr. Hofbauer, who was an ornament of the priesthood and a pillar of the Church. The Emperor now regretted the wrong that had been done Fr. Hofbauer and consulted with others as to how it could be redressed. Learning that the good priest desired nothing more ardently than that his Order should be officially permitted to enter Austria, the Emperor gave his consent and assigned to the Redemptorists the Church of Maria-Stiegen, which was then without any priest. The royal order was promulgated on the very day Fr. Hofbauer died. He had seen it coming and was happy that his work would now be continued with increased forces.

His death was preceded by a severe illness, which he bore with heroic patience. In his death agony, which lasted twenty-four hours,

he lay with folded hands, praying inwardly all the time. When twelve o'clock noon struck in the towers, Fr. Hofbauer, summoning all his strength, said to his brethren: "Pray; the Angelus bell is ringing!" All knelt down and prayed. When they stood up, they saw that Fr. Hofbauer's head was turned to one side and his soul had departed. He died on the 15th of March, 1820.

No elaborate preparations were made for his funeral, yet an enormous crowd of people came. All were weeping, and on all sides could be heard remarks such as: "We have a saint in Heaven!" As undoubted miracles were wrought through Fr. Hofbauer's intercession, he was beatified in 1888 and canonized in 1909. His feast is commemorated on the 15th of March. During the World War the Pope designated him Patron Saint of Vienna.

CHAPTER III

The Lord's Prayer

A. The most beautiful of all prayers is the prayer taught us by Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and therefore called the "Lord's Prayer," or the "Our Father."

"Our Father, who art in Heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."

B. The Our Father contains an invocation and seven petitions.

1. The *Invocation* is: "Our Father, who art in Heaven!" We are permitted to call God our "Father" because He created us to His image and provides for us like a father. But God is our Father chiefly because He poured His grace into our souls at Baptism and thus made us His children and heirs of Heaven. Jesus taught us to say, "Our Father," and not "My Father," in order to show us that each should pray, not only for himself, but for all the others. Since we are children of God, we are brothers and sisters of one another.

"Who art in Heaven." It is true that God is everywhere, but He is present in Heaven in a very special way; for there He is seen and possessed by the elect. When we say the "Our Father," we should place ourselves in thought before the throne of God in Heaven, among the angels and saints, who constantly chant

the most glorious hymns of praise and thanksgiving in His honor.

2. *First Petition:* "Hallowed be Thy name!" By this we mean: "O Father in Heaven, grant that we may rightly understand how holy and good Thou art, and always utter Thy name with the greatest reverence and love! Grant that all men may praise Thee with their whole hearts!"

3. *Second Petition:* "Thy Kingdom come!" In this petition we ask: "O God, may we all share in Thy glorious Kingdom in Heaven! And let Thy Kingdom on earth, the Catholic Church, come to all men! Make of our hearts a kingdom in which Thou reignest always!"

4. *Third Petition:* "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven!" God's will is infinitely good and holy. Further, what He wills is always for our best, if only we love Him. If all men did the will of God, the earth would be almost a Paradise, and all would reach Heaven. Therefore, let us ask: "Father, grant that, as the angels and saints do Thy will in Heaven, so also it may be done on earth!" Even if God sends us suffering, let us humbly pray: "Father, Thy will be done!"

In reciting the first three petitions of the "Our Father" we think chiefly of the glory of God; in the next four petitions we should consider our own needs.

5. *Fourth Petition:* "Give us this day our daily bread!" This means: "O Father, give us today what we need to sustain our life! Save us from want and hunger! But nourish not only our bodies; also feed our souls, that we may live a higher, supernatural life and in the end attain eternal beatitude. Feed our souls with Thy holy doctrine, with Thy powerful grace, with the precious Body and Blood of Thy Son in the Blessed Sacrament."

6. *Fifth Petition:* "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." That is to say: "Father, we have sinned against Thee. We are sorry and firmly resolved to

make amendment. Forgive us! We will also forgive those who have injured us, for they are Thy children as well as we."

7. *Sixth Petition:* "And lead us not into temptation." A temptation is an incitement to sin. Temptations come partly from the devil, partly from the sinful world, and partly from our own wicked concupiscence. Temptations are not sins in themselves; they only become sins if we consciously and voluntarily yield to pleasure in evil. As soon as we notice a temptation, we must forthwith reject it and think: "I will not do it. I will not commit a sin." If the temptation is strong, we must call on God for help. Further, in temptation let us consider that God is present everywhere and sees everything, and that we may die at any moment. God permits temptations to test our fidelity and to give us a chance to increase in virtue and merit.

In the sixth petition we entreat: "Father, let us not enter into temptations which we could not overcome! Help us with Thy grace when we are in danger of yielding to evil influences!"

8. *Seventh Petition:* "But deliver us from evil." These words mean: "Father, protect us from sin and from eternal damnation! Deliver us also from temporal evils, unless perchance they are for our salvation."

The word "*Amen*" at the end of the Our Father means: "So be it! May it happen as we have asked!"

The "Our Father" is a prayer that is suitable for all times and all occasions. We can say it in spiritual and in corporal necessities, we may even use it as a prayer of thanksgiving or of praise. It is advisable sometimes to say it slowly, meditating a while on each sentence, adding pious intentions and resolutions. Thus we shall learn to know its beauty and depth and be encouraged to say this prayer with greater devotion.

What should we do when assailed by temptation?

When assailed by temptation, we should resist at once, pray, and think of the presence of God, of death, and of hell.

Fruits of Morning and Evening Prayer

A seven-year-old boy who used to attend the Catholic school in Aarhus (Denmark) had learned to say his morning and evening prayers faithfully every day. His grandfather, an old whale-fisher, who cared little about God or His commandments, did not like this practise and abused the boy. But the little fellow was not intimidated and continued to pray every day. At last the old fisherman saw that his abuse was to no purpose. He ceased to object and, being a daily witness of the child's piety, gradually became moved by it, wrote down the prayers, and learned them by heart in order that he could say them every day with the child. It was not long until he announced his desire to join the Catholic Church. But a long instruction had to precede his reception, as is always necessary if a conversion is to be solid and lasting. One day the old man entered the room of the priest and the following conversation took place:

"Will you receive me now?"

"Why so suddenly?"

"You have the power to forgive my sins; if I die in my sins, I shall go to hell. Do you want to have that responsibility on your conscience?"

"Why talk about dying? You are in perfectly good health, are you not?"

"Yes, I am not ill now, and have never been ill in my life; but death may nevertheless come at any time."

The old man declared himself ready to do anything the priest thought necessary for him to be received into the Church. The priest was touched, prepared him carefully for some days, and then received him. Shortly afterwards the convert suddenly became ill, received the last Sacraments, and died after a few days. His pious little grandson followed him after a few months. A short time before his death the boy said in school, when they were talking about death, that he would like to die because then he would surely never offend God again.

CHAPTER IV

The Hail Mary—Why We Honour the Mother of God

1. Catholics usually say the "Hail Mary" (Latin "Ave Maria") immediately after the Lord's Prayer:

"Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

This prayer begins with the words with which the archangel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of God: "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee." When, soon after, Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, the latter greeted her with the words: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!" Elizabeth uttered these words under the inspiration of God. The Church added to them the word "Jesus" and the petition: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

2. *"Hail Mary!"* God himself addressed these words to Mary through the mouth of an angel. If God, the infinitely great, salutes Mary, it is surely proper for us to salute her frequently.

"Full of grace." These words, spoken by the angel at God's command, are the highest praise ever received by a human being. They assure us that Mary possessed divine grace as abundantly as it is possible for a human being to possess it. The beauty of God was reflected more gloriously in her soul

than in nature or in any other creature, no matter how holy. Mary is the most glorious of all creatures. She was called "full of grace" also because from the first moment of her existence she was adorned with the grace of God.

"The Lord is with thee" means: God loves thee and is most intimately united with thee. For Mary became the mother of the Son of God, who is Himself true God. Therefore she is in truth the "Mother of God" and in closest union with God,—closer than it is possible for us to realize.

"Blessed art thou among women!" This means: Thou art the most highly praised of all women. Thou shalt be praised as no other woman has ever been praised. This prophecy contains the exhortation to us to praise Our Lady zealously.

"Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus!" That is, "may thy Divine Child, Jesus Christ, also be praised with thee! We praise thee, but we praise Jesus infinitely more." The honour we pay to Jesus is not lessened by the honour we give to Our Lady. We honour her only because she is the Mother of Jesus, and in doing so we honour Jesus Himself. Experience shows that where Our Lady is not revered, reverence for her Divine Son diminishes and finally even faith in Him is lost. It is certain that Jesus cannot be pleased when indifference is shown to His dearly beloved Mother.

3. *"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!"* Our Lady can obtain anything from God through her intercession, because as the "Mother of God" she is very close to Him. God could give us His graces without her intercession; but He loves to give to her and us joy by letting us receive all from her hands. Hence it is exceedingly important for us to obtain her intercession.

"Pray for us sinners." We all have need of Our Lady's intercession because we are all more or less sinners. She can obtain true conversion and pardon for us by her intercession and she can also keep us from committing further sins.

"Pray for us . . . now and at the hour of our death." Now means in this life. We ask the Mother of God to pray for us all through life, but especially at the hour of our death, on which our fate for all eternity depends; we ask her to obtain for us true contrition and forgiveness and protection against the archenemy in our last moments.

4. Besides the "Hail Mary," other prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary are recommended by the Church. Further, the Church has introduced many feasts and commemorations in honour of the Mother of God; Saturday and the months of May and October are dedicated to her in a special manner. The Church desires that we should love, honour, and serve Our Lady as our Mother.

But we should also show our veneration and love for the Mother of God by imitating her virtues, especially her ardent charity, her benevolence, her purity, her humility, her perfect obedience, and her patient resignation.

If we honour the Blessed Virgin throughout our whole lives, we may be sure that she will be a true Mother to us and lead us to her Divine Son in Heaven after death.

Why do we honour the Blessed Virgin Mary?

We honour the Blessed Virgin Mary because she is the Mother of our Redeemer, the Mother of God, and because her intercession is exceedingly powerful.

Lourdes

That the Blessed Virgin Mary intercedes lovingly for all mankind, and how powerful is her intercession, is shown by the manifold and often miraculous help given to pilgrims. The most famous place of pilgrimage in honour of Our Lady is Lourdes in Southern France. There, in the year 1858, she appeared to a poor girl, Bernadette Soubirous, in a grotto on the bank of the River Gave. The Mother of God, clothed in a snow-white robe with a bright blue girdle, smiled with exceeding sweetness, and her whole form was enveloped in heavenly light. On her right arm she carried

a rosary with white pearls and a golden chain. Bernadette saw this apparition eighteen times within a few months. Our Lady only told her who she was after the girl had repeatedly entreated her to do so. She revealed who she was on the seventeenth, that is, the second-last, apparition, saying: "I am the Immaculate Conception!" During one of the apparitions a spring burst forth and began to flow in the grotto, which until then had been quite dry. This stream has continued to flow and in its waters numerous people have been healed of incurable diseases. Hundreds were cured of tuberculosis, ulcers, cancer, open wounds, etc. Blind people had their sight restored, deaf-mutes received hearing and speech. Before the sick are taken to the water of the spring, they are examined by doctors, and those who are healed are again examined afterwards, and all cures are recorded. All doctors, even though they may be unbelievers, are admitted to this medical bureau. In this way a number of miraculous cures have been perfectly attested.

The following is an account of a cure which has been authenticated both medically and legally.

On the 20th of May, 1907, Alphonse Alliaume, a peasant from Falaise, France, was frightfully mauled by a mad bull. After he had been a long time in a hospital, he sued his employer for compensation. The courts awarded him 7,000 francs after three doctors had reported that three fingers of the peasant's right hand were stiff and bent inwards and a part of the arm was disabled; that there was in the abdomen a constantly running wound as large as a two franc piece; and that Alliaume suffered much from illness and indigestion. He could only take milk and raw eggs, and his weight was reduced from 75 to 52 kilograms. About three weeks after this examination Alphonse Alliaume was completely cured of the above-mentioned three maladies at Lourdes. Now his boss, who had been condemned to pay him compensation for disability to work, appealed the case, and on the 25th of November, 1908, the Court of Appeals at Caen decided that while Alliaume had been really incurable at the time of the original decision, he had been suddenly healed in August, and therefore was entitled to compensation only for the time preceding his cure, but not afterward, as he was now no longer disabled. The amount of compensation was reduced to 3,000 francs.

CHAPTER V

The Rosary—How to Recite the Joyful Mysteries

The Rosary is a devotion in honour of Jesus and Mary, in which oral is combined with mental prayer.

The Rosary consists of the Apostles' Creed and five decades. Each of these decades consists of one "Our Father" and ten Hail Mary's. During the recital of each decade, a "mystery," that is, an event of first importance in the life of Jesus or of Our Lady, is meditated upon. In the "Joyful Mysteries," events which occurred in the youth of Jesus are taken; in the "Sorrowful Mysteries," events from the Passion of Jesus; and in the "Glorious Mysteries," events from the glorification of Jesus and Mary. These events should be kept clearly before the mind and pious thoughts, petitions, and resolutions added. We should also ask for grace to carry out our good resolutions. When we recite the Rosary in this way, it fills us with Holy thoughts and aspirations and unites us fervently with Jesus and Mary.

The Church has attached a great many indulgences to the Rosary. These can be gained by using a set of beads that has been blessed by a priest who possesses full faculties. (If the rosary is sold, the indulgences are lost.)

1. The first Joyful Mystery of the Rosary is the *Annunciation.* While meditating on this mystery, we should consider with what reverence the Archangel Gabriel announced the Incarnation to Mary, and with what humility Mary answered: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord!" Mary so attracted God by her deep humility as well as by her indescribable

purity, that He gave her to His Son as His Mother. Let us resolve to strive zealously to attain these two virtues; and when we say, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us," we should think: "Pray for us, so that we also may be humble and pure and pleasing to God."

2. *The Visitation.* Let us contemplate with what holy thoughts and feelings Mary, after the Annunciation, went across the mountains to her cousin Elizabeth. She bore Jesus in her bosom. She brought great happiness and extraordinary graces to the home of Elizabeth. Let us also endeavour to bring true happiness to our neighbours and to impart to them the grace of God. Let us ask Our Lady to help us by her intercession.

3. *The Nativity.* When Mary gave birth to Jesus, she was quite poor in material goods. But she felt exceeding rich and happy, for she possessed Jesus! Let us also seek our happiness, not in transitory things, but in Jesus, loving Him more than all else. Let us ask Our Lady to help us by her intercession to carry out this resolution.

4. *The Presentation.* When the Child Jesus was forty days old, Mary presented Him in the Temple according to the law. On this occasion Simeon prophesied that a sword would pierce her soul. Mary was ready to suffer all that God would send her; she sacrificed herself entirely to God. She also sacrificed the Child Jesus to His Heavenly Father. Following these examples, let us sacrifice ourselves whole-heartedly to God and be ready for all that He may send us. "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray that we may obtain this disposition of self-sacrifice."

5. *The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.* What agony it was for Mary to have lost her Boy in Jerusalem during the Easter Festival! How anxiously she sought Him! How happy she was when she found Him! We too should be deeply grieved if we have lost Jesus through sin, and we should not rest until we have found Him through contrition and pen-

ance, and be resolved never again to lose Him. "Holy Mary, pray for us, that we may never lose Jesus, or if we should have this misfortune, that we may at once seek Him most anxiously and find Him again."

We should, if possible, recite the Rosary every day.

Mary, Queen of the Rosary, Help of Christians

In 1571 the Turks fitted out an enormous fleet of 360 warships in order to conquer Italy. The Christians met the attack with two hundred and forty ships under the command of Don Juan of Austria. The two fleets met in the Bay of Lepanto. The Christian fleet was much the weaker; sun and winds were against it. The battle began; at first the victory inclined to the side of the Turks. But in Rome the faithful held a procession and recited the Rosary, that, through Our Lady's intercession, God would give the Christians victory. Pope Pius V prayed with them, and behold, suddenly the wind changed, and the Christians won a magnificent victory, destroying the naval power of the Turks for ever. By divine revelation the Pope knew the same hour in which it happened that they were victorious, and he communicated the news to the Cardinals. In thanksgiving to the Mother of God for having come to the aid of Christian Europe in such great danger, the Pope introduced the Feast of the Rosary, which is kept on the 8th of October.

CHAPTER VI

The Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

The glorious mysteries remind us of the glorification of Jesus and Mary and should fill us with the desire to share, and with zeal to merit, a similar glory.

1. *The Resurrection.* In this mystery we contemplate how our Lord Jesus Christ gloriously triumphed over death, with what bliss His heart was filled over the fact that, with all His suffering at an end, He could resume His life in Heaven, and the happiness of his Mother when He appeared in all His glory. Jesus will permit us also to arise gloriously from the dead if we serve Him faithfully here and do not refuse the sacrifices He demands from us. Let us resolve always to do His holy will and ask for grace to enable us to keep this resolution.

2. *The Ascension.* In this mystery we contemplate how, forty days after His Resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, attended by innumerable angels, in the sight of His Mother, His Apostles and disciples, to the great admiration of all. He will receive us also into Heaven. We should constantly desire to be with Him, for the desire will incite us to make every endeavour to reach Heaven. Holy Mary, Mother of God, intercede for us that we may have an ardent desire for Heaven!

3. *The Descent of the Holy Ghost.* In this mystery we contemplate how our Lord Jesus Christ, being seated on the right hand of God, sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, who after His Ascension continued in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary, expecting the fulfilment of His promise.

O Sacred Virgin, tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, we beseech thee, help us, that the heavenly Comforter, whom Thy Beloved Son sent down upon His Apostles, to fill them with spiritual joy, may teach us the true way of salvation in this world and strengthen us to walk in the path of virtue and good works. Amen.

4. *The Assumption.* In this mystery we contemplate how the glorious Virgin, after a peaceful and happy death, was assumed with body and soul into Heaven. Our Lady's death was so happy because she did not cling to the earth, but belonged entirely to God, and because during her whole life she had served God faithfully and was free from sin. Let us imitate her virtues as far as we are able; then we can face death peacefully. Holy Mary, intercede for us at the hour of death!

5. *The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin.* Jesus crowned His Mother Queen of Heaven and of the whole world, and bestowed upon her the power of obtaining for us by her intercession whatever we need for our salvation. Let us rejoice at the glory possessed by Our Lady and resolve to be always faithful servants of the Queen of Heaven, honour her, and ask her help every day.

In saying the Rosary it is not necessary to use the meditations given here; you can use your own method; only try to keep before you as clearly as possible each of the mysteries.

If we devoutly recite at least one decade a day and reflect upon the respective mystery, Mary will look upon us as her servants, nay, as her children, and will take us under her powerful protection in life and in death.

Protection and Consolation Gained through the Rosary

During the World War, a Tyrolese soldier in Prutz wrote the following account: "The Russians are in retreat; Warsaw has fallen. . . . To thank God, we Tyrolese go daily, as often as possible, to the trenches and recite the Rosary. Lately, while we were praying, shrapnels suddenly exploded above our heads. A feeling

came to us—straight from God, it seemed—that we should abandon our position. We had gone but a few paces, when a huge shell burst on the very spot where we had knelt."

A war chaplain sent the following account from the Italian frontier to the German Messenger of the Sacred Heart (November 1915): "In the field, July 21st, 1915. . . . A lieutenant of the fourth company told me: 'We had to lie almost motionless between the rocks. It was impossible to dig a trench. From early morning till late at night shots passed above us. I listened again and again for the cry of some sentinel who might have been struck. There was not a sound. Is it possible that no one has been struck! Perhaps some are already dead. That machine gun must be shattered by now. What a morning it will be!!—thus I reflected as the firing continued and bombs burst overhead. The day seemed endless. At last it grew dusk, and soon after the bombardment ceased. I got up and, heedless of the bullets still whizzing through the air, hastened along, and called the sentinels, one after another. Thank God! Not one of them was dead; not one wounded! The machine gun was uninjured! These men had prayed fervently; almost every one of them had his rosary in his hands.'"

A priest sent the following account to the *Christliche Schule,* a Bavarian magazine (November, 1914): "Once, on my round of visiting the sick, I stopped to comfort a soldier who was suffering badly from tetanus. Trying to inspire him with confidence in God, I asked him if he had a rosary. Immediately his neighbour, a soldier from Lorraine, having heard my question, turned round and said: 'The rosary was my only consolation on the battlefield. . . . During the terrible fighting in the Vosges it never left my hands for three days. I went on with courage in my heart' . . . Suddenly the poor tetanus patient seized my hand and said: 'Father, please bring me a rosary, too!'"

CHAPTER VII

Why and How We Should Honour the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Usually it is easiest for us to worship God by turning to Jesus Christ; for in Him the goodness and glory of God have appeared visibly and corporeally before men. Among the many ways of adoring Jesus one of the best is to honour His Sacred Heart.

1. We adore the Sacred Heart of Our Saviour because it is, like His entire Body, inseparably united with the Second Person of the Godhead. It is a Divine Heart. We honour the Heart of Jesus Christ more than any other part of His Body because it is with His Heart that He loves us so dearly. When we honour the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we honour the love of His Heart and all His holy thoughts and emotions.

Jesus Himself has expressed the desire that we should honour His Sacred Heart. In the years 1673–1675 He appeared several times to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a nun of Paray-le-Monial in France. He showed her His Heart pierced by a lance, enveloped in flames, bound by a crown of thorns, and surmounted by a cross, and said to her: "Behold the Heart which has loved men so much, and which was wounded for their sins; the Heart that has shed the last drop of its Sacred Blood for them. And yet for the most part I have received only ingratitude." Jesus asked that a feast should be instituted in honour of His Sacred Heart. On this feast Holy Communion should be received and prayers said in reparation for the insults that are constantly being offered to the Sacred Heart of

Jesus, especially in the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus promised to the faithful who would honour His Heart, an abundance of graces, especially a true love of God, victory over the strongest passions, peace in their families, and at death a secure refuge in His Heart. He also said He would bless all homes in which the image of His Sacred Heart was exposed and honoured.

The Church has carefully examined these revelations, found them to be genuine, and introduced the Feast of the Sacred Heart and universal devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

2. If you desire to honour the Sacred Heart of Jesus, look often at the picture of this Heart and consider the infinite love that abides in the Heart of the Saviour. Awaken within you love for the Heart of Jesus and offer up yourself and all your works to this Sacred Heart. Endeavour to acquire more and more the dispositions of the Heart of Jesus and to practise all its virtues, especially meekness and humility. Jesus Himself has said: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matth. XI, 29). Guard against offending the Sacred Heart, pray for forgiveness of your own sins and the sins of others, and endeavour to make atonement to Jesus for the insults He suffers. Pray often to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and receive this Sacred Heart devoutly in Holy Communion. When in want or trouble, seek refuge in the Heart of Jesus, for He has said: "Come to me all ye that labour and are burthened, and I will refresh you" (Matth. XI, 28). Pray to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and endeavour to induce others to practice this devotion.

It is the desire of our Blessed Redeemer that we should receive Holy Communion in honour of His Sacred Heart, especially on the Feast of the Sacred Heart (the Friday or Sunday after the octave of Corpus Christi) and on the First Friday of each month. Those who receive Holy Communion on the First Friday of nine consecutive months, with the intention of making atonement to the Heart of Jesus for the insults that have

been offered to Him in the Blessed Sacrament, have His promise, through St. Margaret Mary, that they will not die in the state of mortal sin.

Through their veneration for the Sacred Heart of Jesus innumerable Christians have found grace, consolation, and eternal salvation. The Sacred Heart is the richest source of graces. Let us draw from this source frequently.

To strengthen our devotion to the Sacred Heart and to become sharers in the special graces and indulgences granted by the Holy See to those who practise this devotion, it is advisable to join the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Indulgenced Prayers

Sweet Heart of my Jesus, grant that I may ever love Thee more and more!

Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in Thee!

All for Thee, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus!

O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, source of all graces! I adore Thee! I love Thee! I am heartily sorry for my sins and offer Thee my poor heart. Oh, make it humble, patient, pure and conformable to Thy wishes. O good Jesus, grant that I may live for Thee and in Thee! Be my protection in danger, my comfort in sorrow! Give me health, aid me in my necessities, bless all my works, and grant me the grace to die a holy death. Amen.

Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Perhaps never has humanity been in such distress, both spiritual and material, as in our days. Therefore, now more than ever before, it is necessary to have recourse to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Jesus Himself exhorts us to this, when He says: "Come to me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matth. XI, 28). If we honour the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all our present misfortunes will be turned to our good, for the salvation of our souls, which is "the one thing necessary" (Luke X, 42). Our Saviour will protect us even more lovingly if we consecrated ourselves to His Sa-

cred Heart, that is, acknowledge His Divine Majesty and infinite goodness, promising to serve Him with all our strength, and placing ourselves under His protection. Every Catholic family should be solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart.

The custom of consecrating whole families to the Heart of Jesus was introduced by a South American priest, Fr. Mateo of the Society of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Fr. Mateo had a severe illness in his youth. In 1905 he made a pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial. While kneeling before the altar where the Saviour revealed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque the devotion to His Sacred Heart, he was suddenly and miraculously healed. In gratitude Fr. Mateo devoted his whole life to spreading throughout the world the pious custom of consecrating families to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Popes Pius X and Benedict XV blessed and warmly recommended his undertaking. Fr. Mateo preached in many countries and everywhere reaped a glorious harvest. Nearly six million families have already been consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Numerous conversions have resulted from this pious practice. One of the first of these conversions was that of Fr. Mateo's own father, who had been a Protestant. A great many families were entirely transformed by being consecrated to the Heart of Jesus; faith and religious zeal, peace and happiness entered their homes.

The consecration of the family takes place as follows: A picture or statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, having been blessed by a priest, is placed in a position of honour in the house, and thus the Sacred Heart is, as it were, enthroned in the home. In front of this picture (or statue) the members of the family are consecrated to the Sacred Heart, using a suitable form of prayer. Henceforth this picture is regarded as a sanctuary. Every day, especially at night, all the members of the family assemble before this picture for prayers. The whole family endeavours constantly to attain the dispositions of the Sacred Heart, especially charity, purity, meekness, and humility. Frequent Communion, especially on the First Friday or Sunday of the month, should be the practice in such a family. The Saviour, in His revelations to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, promised that he would bless the homes in which an image of His Sacred Heart was exposed and honoured, and that He would bring peace to the families dwelling therein. This promise is fulfilled in a special manner in such families as are consecrated to the Sacred Heart in the way described above.

Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart

O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, filled with infinite love, broken by our ingratitude, pierced by our sins, yet loving us still, accept the consecration that we make to Thee, of all that we are and all that we have. Take every faculty of our souls and bodies and draw us, day by day, nearer and nearer to Thy Sacred Side, and there, as we can bear the lesson, teach us Thy blessed ways. Amen.

The Work of Father Mateo

Father Mateo, the apostle of the consecration of families to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, relates the following incident connected with a conversion:

"A parish priest had won over the whole village to having the enthronement of the Sacred Heart in their homes,—one family after another. He was delighted with his success. It was done with great ceremony, all going in procession from house to house, singing as they went, the whole village taking part.

"A week later a stranger arrived at the village. He came to recover his health after an illness. He was the editor of a newspaper which professed freethought. The bishop had forbidden the people of his diocese to read this paper, and the editor had been excommunicated.

"The parish priest tried to gain him and his family for Christ. With this end in view, he recommended to the Sacred Heart this intention, his congregation joining him. He first made a call on the editor accompanied by Fr. Mateo. Fr. Mateo gives the following account of the visit: After we had entered the sick room the parish priest began: 'We heard of your arrival and have called to enquire how you are?' 'That is very kind of you.' 'May I introduce a friend of mine to you? Kindly ask him to tell you his name; for he is a foreigner and I could not pronounce his name properly.' 'Then you are not from this neighbourhood, Sir?' 'Excuse me,' I said; 'my name is English (Fr. Mateo's surname is Crawley-Boevey). My father is an Englishman, who has been converted by the Sacred Heart.' 'Converted? What does that mean? Please be seated, gentlemen.' 'One day,' I continued, 'my father saw clearly; he understood and cared for things of which until then he had no idea. He became a zealous Catholic.' 'That is wonderful! How did it happen?' 'It happened through the mercy of the Sacred Heart.'

"The sick man became interested, and when a quarter of an hour later we prepared to take leave, he asked us to stay longer. We remained a full hour. He was not converted, but as we were leaving, he expressed a wish to see us again. Ten days later the parish priest telephoned: 'Our patient is very ill. Come quickly.' I hastened to the sick man. He was in bed and was obviously very low. I went to his bedside and took his hand. 'Sir,' I said, 'I am very sorry to see that you have become worse. Are you suffering very much?' 'O yes, I am very ill,' was the answer. Then I said: 'When I say you are suffering, Sir, I mean more than you suppose by these words.' 'What do you mean?' 'I mean you are suffering more in your heart than in your lungs.' 'Oh, yes, a great deal more,' he answered. 'It is caused by an emptiness, a great emptiness.' 'What do you mean by that, Father? You are becoming mysterious.' 'I mean, this emptiness is the result of the absence of Divine Love. . . . Your Heaven, even here on earth, is Jesus Christ and—this Heaven you have not got. The sick man looked embarrassed. 'Father, you do not know to whom you are talking,' he said. 'Pardon me, I do.' 'You don't know that I had my paper printed in red on the day it was banned; that in mockery I had a photograph of the bishop in the first column of the first page?' 'Yes, I know.' 'But do you know that I have been excommunicated?' 'Certainly.' 'I insulted Jesus Christ, and I knew well what I was doing, for on the table on which I was writing I had a crucifix and a catechism and —I reviled both.' 'Yes, Sir, all that is known to me. It is known to Jesus also. But although you hated Him, He loved you. And He sent me to you because He loves you. A word from you, and He will take you to His wounded Heart.' 'O Father, how beautifully you speak! Do continue.' 'Yes, what I have said is beautiful, for it is true. Oh, make haste and speak some words of love. Jesus has sent me to receive them. He will drown all your sins in the ocean of His mercy, and you can be happy with Him for all eternity, with the good thief, Magdalen, and St. Paul . . .!' The sick man gratefully kissed my hand. 'What am I to do, Father? I want to love Him!' he said. 'Confess your sins, my son.' 'Please help me, Father!' And he made his confession, weeping, first with sorrow, and then with joy. 'O Father, how happy I am!' Then he rang a little bell, and his wife came. 'I am the happiest person in the world; I have just made my confession. Oh, you do the same! Promise me, that you will become a zealous Catholic.' The children were then called. 'Kneel down, children,' he said. 'Promise me you will love Jesus.'

He then asked their forgiveness for the bad example he had given and spoke to them in touching words of Jesus. The parish priest prepared his wife and children for Baptism. I prepared the sick man for Holy Communion, and in the presence of an old friend and of his own family, he begged forgiveness from God for the scandal he had given.'"

APPENDIX

Prayers Which Should Be Known by Heart
(Those marked with an asterisk are indulgenced)

1. The *Sign of the Cross* is made, either by making a cross with the thumb of the right hand on the forehead, on the lips, and on the breast; or by placing the right hand on the forehead, then on the breast, then on the left and right shoulders, and saying: * In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

2. *The Lord's Prayer.*

3. *The Hail Mary.*

4. *The Apostles' Creed.*

5. *Praise of the Most Holy Trinity:* "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

6. *The Angelus.* (100 days indulgence each time the Angelus is said when the bell rings, kneeling, except on Saturday evening and Sunday, when it is said standing.) * The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Ghost. Hail Mary, etc.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy Word. Hail Mary, etc.

And the Word was made flesh; and dwelt amongst us. Hail Mary, etc.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray. Pour forth we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

In the evening the following prayer may be added and applied to the Poor Souls in Purgatory:

Our Father. Hail Mary.

V. Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

7. *Morning Prayers.*—Glory be to the Father who created me, and to the Son who redeemed me, and to the Holy Ghost who sanctified me. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*O my God, I believe in Thee, for Thou hast revealed Thyself to us and Thou art truth itself. I hope in Thee, for Thou art my almighty, my infinitely good and merciful Father and Saviour, and Thou hast promised to hear me, help me, and save me. I love Thee with my whole heart. I love Thee above all, for Thou art infinitely good and beautiful. Thou givest me Thy love and Thyself, and askest that I should love Thee in return. Oh, I want to love Thee always, Father, to serve Thee with all my strength, and to be faithful to Thee until death.

All that I think and speak, all that I do and suffer this day, I offer to Thy honour and glory. Assist me by Thy grace and bless all my undertakings; preserve me from all sin.

Our Father. Hail Mary. I believe in God. Glory be to the Father.

(It is advisable sometimes instead of the Our Father, etc., to recite the Ten Commandments, adding: "We will do all that the Lord has commanded.)

8. *Prayer to the Guardian Angel.*

O Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's care commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light, to guard, to rule and guide.

9. *Grace before Meals.*

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive of Thy bounty, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

10. *Grace after Meals.*

We return Thee thanks, Almighty God, for all Thy benefits, who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

11. *Night Prayers.*

In the Name of the Father . . .

My Lord and my God! I adore Thee and thank Thee for all the benefits Thou hast bestowed upon me this day.

Grant me the grace to examine my conscience well.

. . . . . .

O my God who art infinitely good and hatest sin, I beg pardon from my heart for all offences I have committed against Thee. I detest them all, and am heartily sorry for them, because they offend Thy infinite goodness. I firmly resolve by the help of Thy grace never more to offend Thee and carefully to avoid the occasions of sin.

Into Thy hands, O my God, I commend my soul and my body. I commend to Thy care also my parents, relatives, friends, and benefactors, and all the living and the dead.

* Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! I give you my heart and my soul! Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! Assist me in my last agony! Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! Receive my soul at my death! Amen.

In the name of the Father . . .

12. *A Prayer to be Said on Fridays.*

V. We adore Thee and bless Thee, Lord Jesus Christ.

R. Because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

Our Father.

13. *At the Principal Parts of Holy Mass.*

At the Offertory

We offer Thee bread and wine, O Lord; soon it will become Our Saviour. We also offer Thee our hearts; accept them and lead us to Heaven.

At the Consecration

(At the Elevation of the Sacred Host)

In the name of the Father, etc.

My Jesus, I live for Thee! My Jesus, I die for Thee! My Jesus, I am Thine, in life and in death!

Hail, true Body of Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed for me on the Cross! In deepest humility I adore Thee.

(At the Elevation of the Chalice)

In the name of the Father, etc.

Jesus, have pity on me! Jesus, have mercy on me! Jesus, forgive me my sins!

Hail, Most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, shed for me on the Cross! In deepest humility I adore Thee!

(Spiritual Communion)

O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed. (Three times.)

O my Jesus, Thou art present in the Sacred Host. I adore Thee.

I love Thee with my whole heart. I am sorry for having offended Thee. My soul thirsts for Thee. Oh, come to me with Thy grace, and remain with me until death!

14. *Short Prayers.*

When passing a church or meeting the Blessed Sacrament being brought to the sick:

* Praised and blessed be the Most Holy Sacrament, now and for all eternity!

When passing by a Cross:

O love of God! O sin of man!
In this dread act your strength is tried;
And victory remains with love;
For He, our Love, is crucified!
(Rev. F. W. Faber)

Greeting between Catholics:

* Praise be to Jesus Christ! For ever and ever! Amen.

At Work or When Suffering.

All for the love of Thee, O Jesus!

In temptation:

* Jesus, my God, I love Thee above all!
Jesus and Mary, help me, I will not sin.
* Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like Thine!
Let me die rather than sin!
O Mary my Mother, remember, I am thine! Protect Thy child!

THE END

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